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WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 1896.

SIXPENCE.
By Post, 6½d.



THE LATE SIR JOSEPH BARNBY, PRINCIPAL OF THE GUILDHALL SCHOOL OF MUSIC.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY H. S. MENDELSSOHN, PEMBRIDGE CRESCENT, W.

A T R A N D O M.

BY L. F. AUSTIN.

"We'll c'en to 't like French falconers, fly at anything we see."

"In your capacity as patron of the drama, Judson," I remarked to my old friend one day, "you must have befriended many novices on the stage." "I believe you, my boy—chiefly girls. The most extraordinary thing in my life is the way girls have always confided in me. Do you remember that old gag of Toole's, 'Keep your eye on your father, and he will pull you through'? That's just how those trusting blossoms regarded my disinterested cunning." "So, when they wanted engagements, you stepped in as the Universal Parent?" "Why, sir, they used to write in shoals to the *Teetotum*, begging me to recommend them to managers!" "And did their fond mammas share this epidemic of child-like faith?" "I do not hesitate to say," replied Judson, with his most distinguished air, "that among the mothers of struggling actresses my name is a household word. Bless you, they wrote letters, too; endless panegyrics of Jane and Susan, who had spouted Shakspeare at family gatherings from the age of six; were tall and graceful; remarkable for their memory and the whiteness of their teeth; and had impressed the local curate with the refining influence of the skirt-dance. Then there were photographs; and didn't I see Jane's striking resemblance to Ellen Terry? Man, could I disdain these motherly appeals? Could I say that Jane, simpering as Ophelia, or Susan, powdered and patched like Lady Teazle for the whirl of rank and fashion at the assembly-rooms of her native market-town, would be better employed at the sewing-machine? No, sir; the worst rule in life is to advise women for their good against the very thing they are resolved to do."

"But the oddest experience I ever had came about in quite a different way. One morning there bounced into the dog-licence department an elderly lady, in a most excited state, accompanied by a girl, a Persian cat, and a parrot. I asked the old lady what she wanted, and she said she came for justice. 'I have been grossly insulted by one of your people, a horrid, prying man, who says I keep a dog, and he'll summons me for not paying for it. Is *this* a dog?' Here she opened a basket, and out popped the cat, which promptly upset an inkstand all over my annual report to the Commissioners on the secretive habits of the dog-loving population—a document I flatter myself that the public always anticipates with the keenest zest." "You are right, Judson," I said; "a valuable contribution to the social history of our time." "Well," he continued, "before I had got over this surprise, the old lady uncovered the cage, with the parrot inside, and cried, 'Is *this* a dog?' The parrot nodded to me, as if I were an old acquaintance, and croaked 'Albert! This looks bad!'—Then the old lady wept. Albert, she said, was her son, now abroad; he enlisted, and nearly broke her heart; he was such a good boy at home; and when he lay in bed with a fractured rib, after falling off a bicycle, he taught the parrot such amusing tricks. It would march to the tune of 'Tommy Atkins,' which she never could remember; but Aggie knew it. 'Aggie, hum "Tommy Atkins," that's a good girl.' Aggie blushed, and favoured me and the parrot with a few bars of that inspiring ballad; and, sure enough, the bird jumped up and down on his perch with martial gravity."

"Meanwhile, the cat had upset two more inkstands, and the office was demoralised by vain attempts to catch her. 'Madam,' I said hastily, 'I am afraid this charming interview must end. The threat of a summons is most improper; you cannot pay for a dog-licence on a cat and a parrot. I make that admission freely. If you should have any further trouble, pray communicate with me. My name is Judson—Mortimer Judson.' 'Oh, Mr. Judson!' the girl exclaimed, and then blushed again. The next moment the old lady was shaking me fervently by the hand. 'I am glad to meet you,' she said; 'we take the *Teetotum* every week, and Aggie reads your articles aloud. And we've heard of your kindness to girls who want to go on the stage. Now there's Aggie eating her heart out; we've tried all the agents; but if you would hear her recite; not now, of course—Aggie, *do* call the cat; I know this place is for dogs only!—but if you will come and see us, dear Mr. Judson; you have no idea of Aggie's lovely——' 'Mamma!' said the girl; and just then she put her hand to her head, and down came her hair, yards of it—real auburn, my boy. Oh, I've never had any reason to doubt that; but whether she let it down by art or accident, whether it was the scurry after the cat, or a dramatic sense of a good climax, that dishevelled my lady, I have never been sure. The office gasped its admiration, and it was high time to bundle my remarkable visitors into the passage, where mamma repeated her address for the sixth time, and the parrot shrieked 'Albert, you beauty!'"

"And did you pursue this quest of a dramatic prodigy?" "Prodigy!" echoed Judson. "I give you my word that she never recited to me without her hair down! Either it tumbled of its own sweet accord, or I found the Niagara already turned on. And her mother was always by with a brush and comb! I remarked on one occasion that it was very beautiful hair, of course, very suitable to 'The Lady of Shalott,' but not quite in keeping with Hamlet's address to the players. Aggie tossed her head, and said she didn't see the use of appearing on the stage at all if she couldn't display this precious auburn cataract. What can you say to a girl who has no other attraction? I got her an engagement to walk on as a Roman matron in Rowland Smithe's great classical drama, 'Horatius,' and she nearly ruined the piece on the first night." "How did she manage that?" "Well, she was fretful at rehearsals because they made her coil up her blessed hair; and, in the middle of the performance, just when McStringer, the great Scotch tragedian—you don't remember him? Fine actor, sir, when he could wear a toga and crimp his fringe! London has forgotten him; but he wrote me a letter the other day, saying he was drawing crowded houses in Patagonia. Well, just as McStringer was beginning his famous speech to the Roman populace, I saw Aggie put her hand to her head—the old fatal sign! Yes, and down came the hair, till the Roman populace could tread on it! There was a shout of laughter from the gallery, and I thought McStringer would have an apoplectic fit. What could you do with a girl like that? I told her that Smithe ought to write a play specially for her hair to foam in; and I'm blest if her mother didn't take it seriously, and propose this brilliant enterprise to him on my authority!"

"Well, I daresay you'll think the sequel incredible." "My dear Judson!" I protested, "your tales of the histrionic temperament carry conviction to the most sceptical." "Her mother descended on the office again." "With the parrot?" "It was no joke," said Judson, gravely. "She said her daughter had disappeared; was in the river, most likely; the jealousy of those women had driven Aggie to suicide; why had I lured her into that dreadful profession? I was a little irritated by this, and asked what on earth there was to be jealous of. 'Oh, Mr. Judson,' wailed the old lady; 'you ask such a question. You who told her that her beautiful hair was the only support of the declining drama!' You see what it means to jest with some women! I began to think I was responsible for this unfortunate girl's tragic end. By George, sir, the office glared at me as if I were a callous monster! Then I was told, with sobs, that Aggie had overheard the leading lady and one of the dressers at the theatre plotting to cut off the locks which sustained the drama, and excited jealous fury in the bosoms of rivals. Clearly, this young woman was either deranged or a fibber on a colossal scale. But what had become of her? I didn't believe she was in the river; the hair of a drowned corpse, you know, does not look pretty; though, when I mentioned this to the office, there was a perceptible shudder at such brutal cynicism."

"That afternoon I walked the streets distractedly, looking for a head of hair. I can't recommend this as a pastime," added Judson, grimly; "it attracts unfavourable attention. There was a slight fog, and I had to stare rather closely at the women, and some of them resented it." "No, Judson," I interrupted, "don't say that the magic of your liquid eye——" "Stuff, sir! I tell you that in a very short time the hand of a burly policeman fell on my shoulder, and a gruff voice growled, 'Look here, my man, no more of this. I've watched you loitering for the last six weeks.' I paid no heed to him, for at that moment I saw her, sitting in a window, with her back to the pavement. There was a small crowd gazing. 'What lovely 'air she's got!' said one woman. 'Taint real, yer ninny,' said another. 'She's a wax figure, goin' by clockwork.' I knew better; her hand went up to the back of her head with the old familiar trick, and the hair came down in a torrent, and the crowd said, 'Oh-h-h!' as they do at the Crystal Palace fireworks. I rushed away from the policeman, and bounded into the shop. A bland and smiling person behind the counter offered me a bottle. 'Only two-and-six,' he said; 'warranted to produce a glossy——' I removed my hat, and, at the sight of my bald pate, a shout of laughter went up from the crowd outside. 'Aggie,' I demanded sternly, 'what folly is this?' You'll scarcely credit it, but she answered calmly, 'Don't trouble about me, Mr. Judson. I've got a theatre of my own now, and a public all to myself. I've just written to mother, telling her about my new career; she'll be delighted.' By this time the crowd was in the shop, bursting itself with joy, and the burly policeman dragged me off to the station, where I was charged as a well-known loiterer! Luckily, I knew the inspector, or there would have been a nice case in the papers for the dog department of the Inland Revenue. Phew!" concluded Judson, wiping his brow, "whenever I see rich auburn tresses now, I feel like rabies!"



MISS EVELYN MILLARD AS PRINCESS FLAVIA IN "THE PRISONER OF ZENDA,"

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THE VACUUM FOOD PRESERVING APPLIANCES, Limited.

PROSPECTUS.

This Company has been formed for the purpose of acquiring, working, developing, and selling, or otherwise dealing with the completed British Patents (or rights relating thereto), including all future improvements thereon (as set forth in the contract), for closing devices for preserve-jars and other receptacles, invented by Messrs. Franz Guillaume and Ewald Goldstein. The British Patents are numbered 8003 and 8004 of the year 1892, and 2543 of the year 1893.

The invention consists in constructing either jars or bottles in such a way that in the case of cooked foods they can be hermetically sealed, and their contents sterilised and preserved in a vacuum by means of heat, or, in the case of drugs, confectionery, &c., by means of an exhaust chamber. In both cases the operation is simple, inexpensive, and, above all, the perfection of cleanliness.

The articles which can be preserved by this invention are innumerable, amongst them being the following, namely: Preserved meats, fish, and vegetables (usually preserved in tins), milk, pickles, fruits, soups, jellies, drugs, hard confectionery, farinaceous foods, &c.

In order to open the jars it is only necessary to destroy the vacuum. This is done by simply piercing the cover with a penknife, skewer, or other pointed instrument. Directly the air enters, the lid or cover can be at once lifted off. All the danger, trouble, inconvenience, and annoyance at present experienced in opening sealed tins, jars, and bottles are thus avoided.

The advantages of this system are very great. In the first place, as all air is excluded from the jar, and an absolutely air-tight joint formed, the contents will be preserved for an almost indefinite period. Should, however, any change take place in the food, it at once becomes apparent to the eye, and can be seen on inspection, as the jars are made of glass. Moreover, if decomposition sets in, gas will be formed, which will destroy the vacuum and automatically release the cover.

No solder is required for joints or seams, and all risk of lead-poisoning is obviated.

THE VACUUM FOOD PRESERVING APPLIANCES, Limited.

A commercial guarantee of the utility and the practical character of the invention consists in the fact that the following firms, whose names for the specialities of their manufacture are household words, are now using these jars and bottles in large quantities, namely—

Aylesbury Dairy Co., Ltd., St. Petersburg Place, Bayswater, W.; Barnes and Co., Fishmongers' Hall, Upper Thames Street, E.C.; Batger and Co., Stepney (Sale Rooms, 98, Houndsditch, E.); Bovril, Ltd., Farringdon Street, E.C.; Brand and Co., Little Stanhope Street, Mayfair, W.; Crosse and Blackwell, Ltd., Soho Square, W.; and E. Lazenby and Son, Ltd., Trinity Street, Borough, S.E. Bovril, Limited, Food Specialists, London, in advertising their Bovril Beef Jelly, have for some time past referred to Bottles closed on this system, as follows—

"The new package adopted for this preparation enables the beauty of the Jelly to be seen before opening; it is hermetically sealed, yet more easily opened than any other package. Simply puncture the top; the vacuum is thus broken and the lid released. The Jelly will be found quite pure and free from all injurious contact with metal. When this package once secures the attention of the medical profession, no other will be used, as there is an increasing anxiety in the public mind about the action of tin and solder upon articles of food."

The Aylesbury Dairy Company, Limited, advertise as follows in relation to this invention—

"In the Patent Vacuum-Stoppered Bottle, the sole use of which the Aylesbury Dairy Company has acquired for Milk and Milk Foods, the Milk and Cream will, unopened, remain sweet for several weeks. The customers resident in the country and abroad can have consignments sent to them regularly, thus ensuring a perfectly pure and healthy milk supply, as well as avoiding the injury which might be caused to a delicate infant by changing the source. Highly satisfactory reports have been received, in one instance the milk being certified as perfectly sweet at the end of three months."

The well-known firm of Stollwerck Bros., of Cologne, one of the largest fruit-bottlers in the world, and who have branch businesses in all the leading countries of Europe and America, have given a certificate with respect to the use of the invention in Germany, of which the following is a translation—

"We certify, on your request, that we have used exclusively for our preserved goods for two years the Guillaume and Goldstein cover, with the best results.
(Signed) "STOLLWERCK BROS."

THE VACUUM FOOD PRESERVING APPLIANCES, Limited.

The business is only in its infancy, but the commercial value of the invention has been thoroughly tested and proved. Judging from the royalties which the licensees are now paying for the right to manufacture, the Directors are convinced that larger profits may be secured to this Company and greater facilities given to licensees by establishing works to manufacture and supply appliances on a scale sufficiently large to meet the increasing demand, for which purposes the working capital is required. Taking the royalties which the present licensees have agreed to pay (per gross) as a basis for calculation, the Directors have every reason to believe that large profits will be earned.

The Aylesbury Dairy Company have entered into a contract with the Patentees for the sole right for milk, and all products of which milk forms a material ingredient, by which that Company undertakes to pay a minimum royalty of £500 per annum during the life of the Patents, of which contract this Company will have the benefit.

In order to indicate the importance of this invention, it may be mentioned that there are about 45,000 grocers and 1000 Italian warehousemen in the United Kingdom dealing in preserved foods, to which this invention can be advantageously applied.

Messrs. Johnsons and Wilcox, of Lincoln's Inn Fields, W.C., the well-known Patent Agents, were consulted, and after a careful search prepared a case, which was submitted to Mr. J. Fletcher Moulton, Q.C., F.R.S., and the following is a copy of the questions, and his opinion thereon—

"Counsel is requested to peruse and consider the Specifications left herewith, and to advise—
"1. Whether the inventions described in Guillaume and Goldstein's Letters Patent infringe any of the previous Letters Patent herein referred to; and
"2. Whether, in his opinion, the inventions contained in Guillaume and Goldstein's said Letters Patent are novel?"

[Opinion.]

"1. No.

(Signed)

"2. Yes.

"J. FLETCHER MOULTON."

Mr. Perry F. Nursey, Past President of the Society of Engineers, London, has examined the invention, upon the practical character and commercial prospects of which he reports most favourably. A copy of his report accompanies the prospectus.

THE VACUUM FOOD PRESERVING APPLIANCES, Limited.

The price to be paid to the Vendor for the patents and rights to be acquired by the Company is £40,000, payable as to £25,000 in cash, and the balance in fully paid-up shares, or cash and shares at the option of the Directors, which would leave 20,000 shares of this issue available for working capital. All expenses connected with the formation and registration of the Company up to and including allotment will be paid by the Vendor.

The only contract to which the Company is a party is one dated Jan. 30, 1896, and made between John D. B. Lewis of the one part and the Vacuum Food Preserving Appliances, Limited, of the other part.

This agreement, the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the opinion of Mr. J. Fletcher Moulton, Q.C., F.R.S., and the case prepared by Messrs. Johnsons and Wilcox, can be inspected at the office of the Solicitors to the Company.

There are various contracts entered into by the Vendor in connection with the formation of the Company, to none of which this Company is a party. There are also trade contracts as to royalties which have been entered into, but it is obviously not in the interest of the Company that such contracts should be open to inspection. Applicants for Shares must be deemed to have waived further compliance with Section 38 of the Companies Act, 1867.

Applications for Shares must be made upon the form accompanying the prospectus, and be accompanied by a remittance of five shillings per Share. In cases where the number of Shares allotted is less than the number applied for, the surplus amount paid on deposit on such Shares will be credited towards the amount payable on allotment. Where no allotment is made the deposit will be returned in full.

Prospectuses and forms of application for Shares may be obtained at the offices of the Company and at the Bankers, Brokers, and Solicitors.
Jan. 30, 1896.

THE LATE SIR JOSEPH BARNBY.

Only those who knew Sir Joseph Barnby at home could fully realise the absolute devotion of the man to his art. I remember having a long talk with him in his charmingly quaint house in the old Gothic cloisters at Eton—a talk made delightful by a number of brilliant little musical interludes, Mr. Barnby, as he then was, sitting at his beloved pianoforte, cigar in mouth—he was always a big smoker—and illustrating his chat every now and then with a *morceau* rendered with the touch of a master. Sir Joseph loved all music with a most all-embracing catholicity of affection, but Church music above all, in which, like his great friend, Sir Arthur Sullivan, he had been steeped from the days when, before his seventh birthday, he sang as a chorister-boy in York Minster. For Sir Joseph came of a musical family, whose love of melodious sounds and talent for creating them were bred in the bone. He was one of a very large family, and his father was a man in quite humble circumstances; but he and his children, almost without exception, were endowed by nature with a fine sense of harmony, a faultless “ear,” and, moreover, with a sturdy resoluteness and determination of character which enabled them, while still quite young, to master the technique of the beautiful art which seemed marked out as their natural vocation. As quite a child, Joseph Barnby, though never thrust forward as an infant phenomenon, displayed so unmistakable a bent for music, that it was wisely fostered and encouraged in every way within the reach of his friends. The result was that, at an age when most boys were plodding laboriously through “Trab, trab,” and “Il corricolo,” young Barnby was revelling in the best works of the old English and Italian Church composers, and his artistic temperament was getting tintured through and through with the particular class of music to which all his life he was most devoted, and in the development of a taste for which, among the public, his greatest successes were achieved.

I remember the earnestness, the enthusiasm, with which he spoke of the old Church composers, and the “giants”—Mendelssohn and Mozart, Haydn and Beethoven, Handel and Bach—playing from time to time fragments from their immortal works. Sir Joseph at that time had no idea of leaving the beautiful old College, where he was immensely popular, and among the students of which patrician school he developed an unsuspected love of music, to cast in his lot with London’s millions, forsaking the peaceful, pleasant, if rather humdrum life of Eton for the ampler, more fascinating, but, alas! more exhausting, life of the Metropolis. When Sir Joseph accepted the post of organist at the school of which Mr. Burnand has given us so many pleasant glimpses under the transparent disguise of “Holyshadia”—“Henry’s holy shade”—the boys who learned music at all were in a very small minority, while anything like musical enthusiasm, except in a very few cases, was quite unknown. It was largely due to Mr. Barnby’s unwearying energy, his obvious and unaffected zeal, his patent enjoyment of his work, that Eton boys began to regard music as something very different from one more additional subject in the College curriculum, and to appreciate it as at once the most delightful of recreations as well as accomplishments. Sir Joseph lived to see a considerable spread of musical taste among the coming generation, both from his work at Eton and, later, at the Guildhall School; and, as he used to say, a taste for music must not be mistaken for a knowledge of music, but the one must as certainly precede the other as the night the day. I remember that he once told me, in speaking of the popularisation of a taste for music in this country, that he thought we owed a great deal of it to the Queen, the Prince Consort, and the royal family, who were not only, with few exceptions, intense lovers of music, but executants of no mean power. The Queen, as all the world knows, was a favourite pupil of Mendelssohn, for her ability and refined taste, quite apart from all question of her rank; the Prince Consort was an excellent player and a clever composer; the Empress Frederick, Princess Christian, and Princess Beatrice are all skilful pianists; and the Duke of Edinburgh is a violinist and composer of genuine talent.

Sir Joseph had, among several well-marked idiosyncrasies, a wholesome contempt for the fashion which obtained a generation ago for affecting a belief that there was no such thing as English musical talent—an affectation which had a painfully practical result, as no one stood any chance of success unless he could tack on Signor, or Herr, or Mons., as a prefix to his name; and he held the opinion that the public had only themselves to thank if, now and then, a plain “Mr.” disguised himself with an Italian prefix, and an “ini” or “elli” as a suffix to his honest English patronymic, and treated them to some genuine Anglo or Celtic Italian at Continental prices. He was a hater of humbug, and triumphed in the demolition of this nonsense by the talent of such native-born composers as Sullivan, Cowen, Parry, Mackenzie, Stanford, and others.

The popular conductor-composer-musician spent much of his time in drilling armies of executants in the adequate rendering of great oratorios, and held always the belief that there could be no finer training for a musician than the Church and madrigal music of England and Italy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. He always insisted, too, upon the necessity of hard work, holding that, although “the labour we delight in physics pain,” still, the labour must be there, or the result would be more painful than the process, and not, he would add, with a humorous twinkle through his glasses, to ourselves alone.

Sir Joseph will be greatly missed in musical circles in London. His position at the Guildhall School of Music brought him into close contact with every class of professional musicians, and he retained a hold on the younger generation which only a man who had the advancement of youth at heart could possibly have.

THE LITERARY LOUNGER.

When Mr. Laurence Binyon’s “Lyric Poems” appeared, a little while ago, they were, I believe, kindly received; but he was not hailed with loud enthusiasm as a new poet that all cultivated persons should do honour to at once. And I have not so clear a recollection of the volume as to have any opinion now about the justice or injustice of the tepid approval accorded to it. But Mr. Binyon leads off in Mr. Elkin Mathews’ new poetical series—bearing the doubtfully poetic name of “The Shilling Garland”—with a book of new verses, “London Visions,” and there seems to me to be no question at all about the uncommon worth of these. There are only twelve of them in all; others are going to appear later on. I won’t say they are twelve very fine poems; but they are twelve genuine things cut out of the heart of London life, and some of them are poems of a big order. I doubt whether Mr. Binyon will ever make very melodious music, and, though his measures are pleasing enough sometimes, and are generally dictated by the thought they carry, as yet, at least, he is not to be read for any wealth of happy images and fine-sounding words. But the stuff of poetry is in him, as it is in few of our pleasant verse-writers to-day; and I doubt if one of the London poets—I am not forgetting Mr. Henley—has put so much of actual London into his poetry, or looked at London sights more individually. This, from “The Sleepers,” is no artificially stirred emotion—

O what shall I tell you, you that ache
And number the laggard hours awake?

asks the Watcher. He knows he has little of comfort to tell, but while he searches the eyes close—

And now on wings the sorrows flee
From the happy sleepers hither to me.
O noiseless sorrows, darkly thronging,

Feed on my heart that is open and bare,
Feed your fill, sorrow and care.

Take me, pains of all souls forlorn,
For O too swiftly arrives the morn.

There are some lines in “Whitechapel High Road” which one would like some over-anxious philanthropists to read, ponder, and take comfort from. The poet has been wandering among the buying and selling crowd by night—

Swelt to me this press
Of life unnumbered, where if hard distress
Be tyrant, hunger is not fed
Nor misery pensioned with the ill-tasting bread
Of pity; but such help as Earth ordains
Betwixt her creatures, bound in common pains,
Brother from brother, without prayer, obtains.

But perhaps the humanest, as it is the prettiest, is “The Escape,” a tale of a little London boy and girl who long to see the country, who walk hand in hand through the June night to get there; meet a home-going waggon, climb up, fall asleep, and are borne into their desired haven. Instinctively he has chosen the simplest of words and metres, a kind of jingling, jolting metre, that goes in tune to the magic waggon in the tale—

Willie, how peaceful ’tis and soft
Across the water! See,
The trees are sleeping, and stars aloft
Beckon to you and me.

Now hand in hand up to the Night
They gaze, and she looks down
With large mild eyes of grave delight,
The mother they have not known.

The morning star shines in the pond:
A cock crows loud, and bright
The dawn springs in the sky beyond,
The birds applaud the light.

But on into the summer morn,
Beneath the gazing east,
The sleepers move, serenely borne:
The world for them has ceased.

Mr. Binyon has written a charming poem in “The Escape,” and he has probably not the less benefited the Country Holiday Funds that his appeal in their favour is unconscious and spontaneous.

I have already quoted much from a very little book, and I should like to quote more; but the rare pleasure of reading twelve poems by a new poet, not one of which is a mere experiment in rhythm, or follows any peculiar fashion of the day in thought or sentiment, leads one on to tempt others to share it. I hope Mr. Binyon has “London Visions” enough to fill a great many more of Mr. Mathews’ “Shilling Garlands.”

“Christian and Leah, and other Ghetto Stories” (Dent), which Mr. A. S. Arnold has translated from Leopold Kompert, will instantly, to English readers, suggest comparisons with Mr. Zangwill’s sketches of Jewish life. This is a pity, perhaps, for the newer book cannot well endure the test. The translation is very bad, and, perhaps, is partly responsible for the evident inferiority. Kompert’s tales might possibly be, in the original, delicate and touching, but in sentiment and language, and knowledge of character, they are, judging from this version, on a level with our Sunday School literature, their only interest being the light they throw on Jewish ceremonies and family life. But Mr. Zangwill’s did as much in that way, and were robust pictures of human nature at the same time. I hope his success as a novelist of commonplace English life will not divert him from the field where his qualities show him at his best.

LIFE AS A "PRINCIPAL BOY."

A CHAT WITH A WELL-KNOWN PANTOMIME "STAR."

"Yes, Miss Birmingham" (for that is how she wishes to be known in the following interview) "is in," said the neat-looking serving-maid who opened the door to me (writes a *Sketch* representative); "but I'm afraid she won't see you, she's so busy just now. But I'll go and see."

While she was speaking, I was being shown into a pretty little sitting-room. When the door closed I had a good look round. It was evident that the occupier was connected—and that intimately—with the profession. Photographs of both the fair owner and her numerous professional friends and rivals were stuck about on the table, writing-desk, mantelpiece, and on the walls and brackets, with profusion, and a charming want of method. Over the mantelpiece was hung an enlargement of a photo by Alfred Ellis of Miss Birmingham in her last but one "principal-boy" rôle. I was gazing at this, when the door opened, and the lady herself entered.

"What a truly excellent photograph!" I exclaimed, after the usual greetings.

"Yes," she replied, seating herself in the cosiest of padded wicker chairs, and stirring up both a beautiful long-haired Persian and the fire; "but, somehow, I don't quite like it. It is almost too life-like, don't you know. I shouldn't care to be photographed with—well, with so little on again. I dare say," she continued, laughing, "that you're like most other people, and think the great object of the 'principal boy' is to undress the part as much as possible. I often wish the costumes designed were a little more ample, and not quite so transparent, I can assure you. But I mustn't ramble on in this way. What do you want to know?"

"Everything."

"Dear me! How extremely modest of you! But as you're an interviewer, perhaps it would be as well for you to ask questions. I loathe interviewers," added the speaker, with a smile which somewhat belied her words.

"Well," said I, "what do you think of interviewers?"

"I think them an evil in disguise—that is, some of them. They ask all sorts of impertinent questions—"

"Thank you!" I interjected.

"Oh, of course, I'm generalising. And, and—oh, yes, they put down a lot you don't say, and give the public a wrong impression of one. Fancy!" waxing indignant, "the other day one called on me, asked me a lot of questions, went away, said I 'preserved my youth well when not in the footlights' glare' (I'm well under five-and-twenty), had 'a good figure'—"

"Which nobody will deny," I cut in.

"And then gave me a waist two inches larger than it is, and made me possess"—tapping a place midway below her knees—"which for clumsiness would not have disgraced a professional football-player. The Yankee interviewers are the worst, however—they are so sly. One who 'did' me for his paper, after making me talk as no woman ever does, I suppose, out of Houndsditch, got at my dresser, who thought she was doing me a good turn, no doubt; and next day I was amused—oh, yes, I remember I was very much amused—to read: 'Miss Birmingham laces and graces a small-size Paris corset'; 'she takes a ten-dollar perfumed bath every day'; 'Blank's skin-soap is the cause of her good cuticle.' And then followed, under these startling head-lines, a minute description of my *lingerie* and dress generally."

"Did you make your début as a boy 'principal' or otherwise?"

"Otherwise. I made my bow to the British public in pantomime, it is true, but not in at all a leading part. It was in the provinces, and I was a very little girl, and played as such. The show was 'Jack the Giant-Killer,' and I was one of the children the Ogre had reserved for breakfast. As far as I can remember, all I had to say was, 'Oh, please don't, Mr. Ogre; I've got a father and mother.' I fancied, I remember," continued Miss Birmingham, "that I must have pleased the folks, for they laughed so much. I believe I said my line very prettily; but no doubt some of the merriment was caused by my having, in my hurry, taken up petticoats and all in my effort to wipe my eyes with the corner of my pinafore. Nowadays," said the speaker meditatively, "it is a common practice with 'principal girls,' perhaps because the *lingerie* worn is so much more attractive than it used to be. Anyhow, when I did it I was told to be more careful next night."

"When did you first appear as 'principal boy'?"

"Also in the provinces," was the reply, "when I was about seventeen. I can tell you I shan't easily forget my nervousness on that Boxing Night seven years ago. I had got successfully, after infinite care, into the pinkest of silk tights (they're terrible things to tear if not properly coaxed), my trunks, bodice, shoes, &c., and had put on my helmet, girded on my gold-plated sword, and grasped my shield. But, all the same, I felt horribly nervous. I forgot my lead once or twice, and a voice from among the 'gods' shouted out, 'When found, make a note of it!' I was put on my mettle, my memory came back, and I didn't again need prompting while the curtain was up."

"Do I like boys' parts?" said the speaker, as the door opened to admit the maid with tea. "Yes, immensely. There is more freedom in them. Of course, I can dance; and dance quite decently in skirts, too. In my boy's dress I have learnt to kick a good bit above my own head, do the 'splits,' and 'shoulder arms,' so that, if necessity came, I could develop into a Parisian Quadrilliste, as that sort of thing seems most popular. In fact, I have gained applause for my skirt-dancing

already. It is two years ago. The girl who was to do the skirt-dance was taken ill at the last minute. I hurried off the stage, changed my own for her things, and went on during the *entr'acte*. Next day the papers said, 'Miss L.'s substitute was an excellent exponent of her art. . . . She has a supple, graceful figure, and good style. . . . In fact, she is a very *houri* of the *danse serpentine*.' The same paper commended me for 'substantial charms of figure and good singing' as the Prince."

"What has been your most embarrassing, most uncomfortable, and most adventurous experience?" I next asked.

"On the stage?"

"Yes."

"My most embarrassing experience," said Miss Birmingham, after a slight pause, "was while doing duty as a girl for a friend who was unwell, I being out of an engagement at the time. It was a soubrette part, with a dance thrown in. I had to get some under-things for use on the first night in a hurry. I told the dresser to be sure to see to the fastenings. Well, the first act went all right. In the second, my dance came in. I had taken only a step or two when I felt something part round my waist, and, lo and behold! a second or two later a white button rolled slowly to the footlights. Then I felt a garment which I needn't particularise slipping down and down with every step. I knew that in a minute or two I should be unable to retire gracefully, and so I retired—to repair damages—at once, much to everyone's surprise. The most uncomfortable experience I have had was while taking a small part as a Watteau shepherdess early in my career. I was about eighteen at the time. On the night—my dress had been sent the last minute to be altered—it was discovered that a mistake of two inches had been made in the waist. It was barely seventeen instead of nineteen inches. I had to get into it, however, and, though I think several of the other shepherdesses were envious of my figure, I was in excruciating pain the last hour. My most adventurous experience was while playing Sinbad in a big Midland town. The Roc had to fly away with me, and as I ascended in his claws I felt their hold slipping. I had almost reached the flies, some twenty-five feet above the stage, when the bird let me fall. I closed my eyes, expecting to be smashed to pieces. I fell, but luckily on the egg, which, being of some composition, yielded, and, in a word, let me down easily."

"Two more questions, please. How do you keep and how did you get your superb figure? And what do you think the necessary or advisable qualifications of a good 'principal boy'?"

"Three questions, isn't it?"

"I admit the correction."

"The first two may be answered in one. I got my figure, such as it is, by carefully studied exercises for developing whatever point was most in need of development. I take exercise, and practise, and even invent exercises, with that object in view. Then as to your last question. A good 'principal boy'—an ideal one, I had, perhaps, better say—should be good-looking, have a good voice, have a good figure—this is essential—and be able to dance."

"Letters? Oh, yes, I get hundreds during the pantomime-season," replied the speaker, as I rose to go. "Once, when playing in 'panto.' in the North of England, I received a letter from a girl in love with me. She quite thought I was a boy. But I've really no time for more talk."

"And it's true we're going to lose you this year?"

"If you mean I'm going back to my first love, the Midlands, then, yes," was the ready reply.

PANTOMIME.

The late seats fill, impatient foot-taps

Drown the last bars of that waltz from Strauss;

The music changes; one strained string snaps;

Hushed is the house—

Lantern-light shines on a fairy city,

While over the stage, with grin and gape,

Making laughter, then asking pity,

Creeps man, or ape.

Dawn grows to sunlight; a crowding chorus

Suddenly sweeps from the painted wings,

Sweeps and swerves, as it leaves before us

A girl who sings!

Alone she stands, by the footlights, smiling,

And bends, as she sings to an old refrain,

While something subtle, intense, beguiling,

Sweeps through my brain.

Now I am here—as her last note lingers

My eyes grow full of a mist, which clears,

Other notes echo, from other singers,

In other years!

No more these lights, but a twilight tender,

The scent of roses and mignonette,

A laughing group, and, reed-like and slender,

An old spinet!

A long, low room— Ah! your song has ended,

Two curtains fall softly, and hide from sight,

Days and dreams you have somehow blended,

Aladdin, good-night!

C. E. C.



MISS CHURTON AS APOLLO IN "JACK AND THE BEANSTALK,"

AT THE THEATRE ROYAL, MANCHESTER.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY LAFAYETTE, DUBLIN.

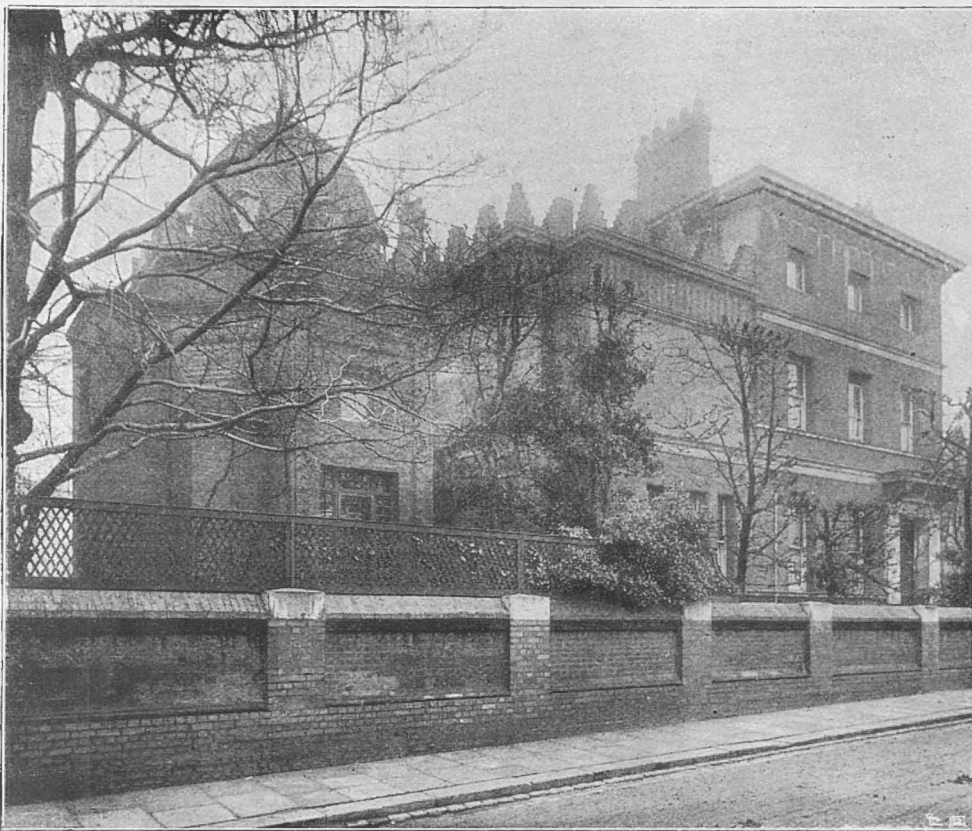
SMALL TALK.

The body of Prince Henry was transferred at Madeira on Thursday last from the cruiser *Blonde* to H.M.S. *Blenheim*. The funeral takes place to-day.

Lieut.-Colonel Davidson has gone to Osborne as Groom-in-Waiting on the Queen in place of Lieut.-Colonel Lord William Cecil, who went to Madeira to escort home the remains of Prince Henry, which H.M.S. *Blenheim* bears from Madeira. In consequence of Prince Henry's death, the christening of the infant son of the Duke and Duchess of York has been postponed until Monday week.

The children of Princess Beatrice, accompanied by their tutor and governess, will arrive at Nice about Wednesday.

St. Paul's was the fitting resting-place for Lord Leighton, whose remains were interred there on Monday. Among his most amiable personal traits should be noted his fondness for good music. For years he was a regular subscriber to the Richter Concerts, occupying always the same place in the St. James's Hall—a corner seat by the centre gangway in the middle of the auditorium. I saw him, I think, on almost his very last appearance in public, in the spring of 1895, a few days before he was ordered abroad. Sir Frederic (I may be allowed to use the familiar name) was then present at Queen's Hall, at one of the concerts of the Bach Festival, and was observed to be



THE LATE LORD LEIGHTON'S HOUSE IN HOLLAND PARK, KENSINGTON.

Photo by Messrs. Russell and Sons, Baker Street, W.

applauding warmly the playing of Herr Joachim, of whom he was an ardent admirer. He was also a well-known figure at the Opera and at important first-nights. There has recently been a controversy at his native place, Scarborough, as to the precise house where he was born; so difficult is it to be accurate in these matters.

"At Trinity Church I met my doom." The refrain has kept ringing in my ears since I heard that Miss Decima Moore is to be married on the 20th inst., in Holy Trinity Church, Sloane Street, to Captain Cecil Walker-Leigh, late of the Gordon Highlanders. Need I say that I wish her every joy? It is curious to note that Mr. W. S. Gilbert, whose protégé Miss Decima was, held a commission in what has become the Militia battalion of the gallant Gordons.

If we have any tyrants they are in the Office of Works. The First Commissioner has issued a regulation prohibiting the laying of wreaths on the pedestals of statues except by a "qualified" official. This means that when Mr. Herbert Vivian and his fellow Jacobites betake themselves in procession to the statue of the Martyr, they must allow a Hanoverian minion to profane their wreaths. They would not consent to this last week, but next time something of this sort will happen—

TIME: *Midnight.* SCENE: *The Statue of Charles I. Enter Jacobites softly whistling "Charlie is my darling."*

QUALIFIED OFFICIAL. What's up now?

MR. HERBERT VIVIAN. Stand aside, and do not sully this sacred spot with your abhorred presence.

Q. O. That's all very fine, but you don't put those wreaths here; that's my business.

MR. H. V. Upstart of Hanover, beware! Do not drive desperate men to extremities. Allow you to lay venal paws on our holy offerings to the Martyr! Never!

CHORUS OF JACOBITES. We'd sooner die.

Q. O. There's no objection to that.

MR. H. V. No ribaldry, Sir! (*Through his clenched teeth.*) If you do not stand aside, I shall start a new organ of the aristocracy and denounce you!

CHORUS OF JACOBITES (*with bitter emphasis*). Ah!

Q. O. (*visibly quaking*). It's all right, Mr. Vivian. I'm one of you. Bless you! I've been a Jacobite since I was a baby. Hurrah for the Stuarts!

MR. H. V. Noble fellow! And I mistrusted you! (*Falls on his neck, and hands him the wreaths.*)

CHORUS OF JACOBITES (*making off*). Ha! We have friends even in the Office of Works! The usurper's dynasty is doomed!

Q. O. (*to himself*). I did that rather neatly, I think. Bless them, they'll believe anything!

It seems hardly necessary to go back to "*L'Aventurière*" to find the subject of Mr. Fergus Hume's "new and original" comedy, for the author himself would hardly claim novelty for the idea of the handsome adventuress who dupes the rich old man, but has her schemes spoilt by his son or nephew. Possibly Mr. Hume would say that the germ of his piece is in a tale of his called "*My Cousin from France*." However, the really important charge of a plagiarism that a critic can make against a playwright is rather in respect of treatment than subject. To me an old subject, handled with originality, is at least as interesting as a work with a bran-new plot. Now the treatment of "*The Fool of the Family*" is certainly not quite novel. In style the author has gone back somewhat in date, and there is an ingenuous simplicity in his devices for earning laughter that is quite touching. The scenes between Cousin Tilly, the elderly heiress, and the young man whom she pursues and captures are handled with such blunt, eager candour that they suggest old days to the critic, while the efforts of Rose alternately to bluff and cajole Peter appeal strongly to the memory. However, this does not matter to the class of playgoers likely to be pleased by the new and original comedy, which might more accurately be called a farcical melodrama. Such playgoers love the old jokes and old scenes, and the question of success is simply the question how many of the unsophisticated can be attracted.

To the jaded palate, works that act on the maxim "*The longest way round is the shortest way home*" are apt to be irritating, and, at times, I felt a longing to see Peter call in the police instead of earn a reputation for cleverness by acting with great stupidity. If Rose and her companion were half as clever as we are asked to believe, poor Peter would have come to grief in his clumsy counterplots, and probably have had his head broken by Basil Lambert when he was playing watch-dog in the dark. There were many of the audience who seemed to like the play, even to rejoice in its farcical humours; and, if the speeches had been cut and the *entr'actes* shortened, there seems no reason why it should not have run for some length of time, though there was no "*Mystery of a Hansom Cab*" success in it.

Mr. H. B. Irving, I think, has never acted so cleverly before; his task of representing an old man was, no doubt, simplified by the fact that in the piece he is a young man passing as old, and, therefore, momentary lapses were natural. Yet he showed a distinct feeling for character, and, if he suggested strongly his illustrious father, it was not merely by imitation. In handling the part of a cool, firm man, Mr. Cartwright has few rivals, so his Peter was interesting. It is a long time since Mr. Pateman has had a good part, and a pity, too, for he is a versatile, clever actor. Miss Ashwell was, perhaps, a little too skittish as the *ingénue*, but decidedly ingenious. Poor Miss Gertrude Kingston seemed depressed by the emptiness of her part, and played without the vitality that she generally shows.

A soured critic once, referring to the tank, said that Boucicault's play had, to use the French phrase, fallen into the sea. I believe he was vexed at being sent to do the first night at the Princess's instead of the Empire. To me, although I hardly get such pleasure out of the tank as Boucicault would have found in the realism of it, the present revival is pleasant enough. The play has extraordinary vitality, and, indeed, despite its thirty-six years of age, seems fresher and younger than the melodramas of '94. One can never hear Dion's name without regretting that no play of his exists which suggests the full measure of his brilliant gifts. Had he lived to-day, and caught the mania for earnestness, we should have enjoyed some great work from his pen. Mrs. Boucicault's appearance as Mrs. Creegan, in which she acted charmingly, reminded the older critics that her Eily at the Adelphi in 1860 was an exquisite piece of acting, and they could hardly be expected to do full justice to the excellent performance of Miss Beaumont Collins, who took very kindly to the tank. Everybody seemed pleased by the able work of Miss Agnes Hewitt. If it cannot be said that the men were quite what one hoped, it must be admitted that, on the whole, they did their work very well, and, consequently, the play had a very hearty reception.

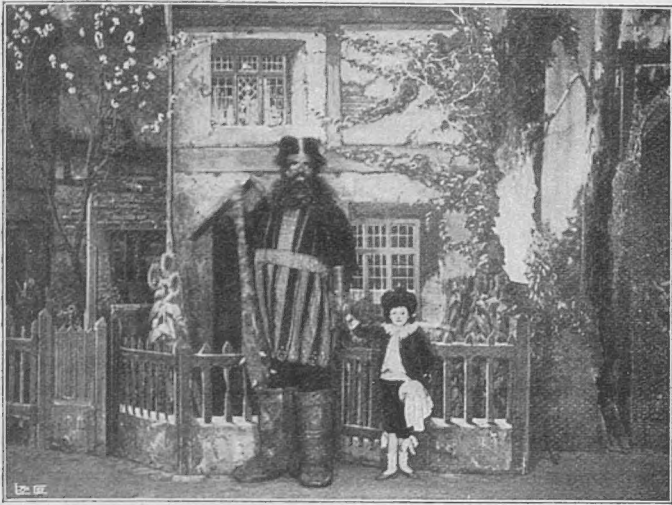
Miss Mabel Love tells me she hopes to be back in town by the beginning of March, though she has had several tempting offers to stay in America.

Miss Helene Pillans, who figures in "Jack and the Beanstalk," at the Theatre Royal, Manchester, is the daughter of a well-known Scots comedian, and her mother was also on the stage. Her rise as a pantomime favourite has been rapid.

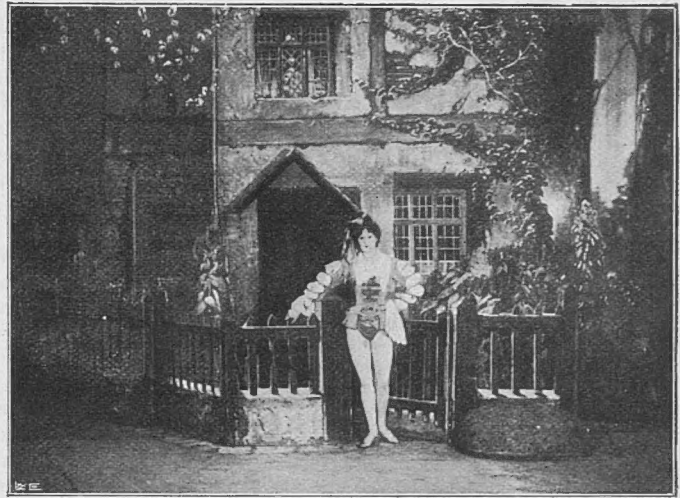
In that quaint romance, "Le Voyage de Shakespeare," M. Léon Daudet makes the Bard of all time say that the noblest walk in life is the comedian's—*métier décrié, mais sublime*. The Bard has been supposed to express a different opinion in the "Sonnets," where he complains of having to make himself "a motley to the view"; but, then, the "Sonnets," like statistics, can be made to prove anything. Somebody

the rest, Willett's "Baby Doctoring her Cat," Phil May's "Recruiting Sergeant," and his "Policeman and the Lost Child," Aubrey Beardsley's astonishing "Lady and Dwarf," Greiffenhagen's "Anxious Husband," Dudley Hardy's study of a first-night audience, and J. W. T. Manuel's equally striking presentment of the "gods," are, perhaps, the most acceptable in a *brochure* which is full of notable work from cover to cover.

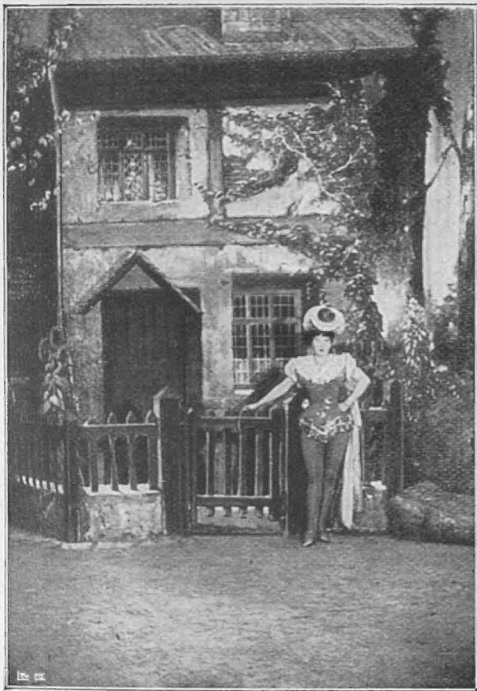
Paul Verlaine seems to have left at least two volumes of unpublished verse. The first, to which he himself gave the title of "Varia," contained, according to the poet's own belief, his best work, and recalls "Sagesse." This volume will contain the poem on Oxford, written by Verlaine after his last visit to England. The second collection of verses will bear the significant title of "Invectives," and would have been published some time ago had not the poet been dissuaded from doing so by his friends. In "Invectives" the writer passes in review his personal



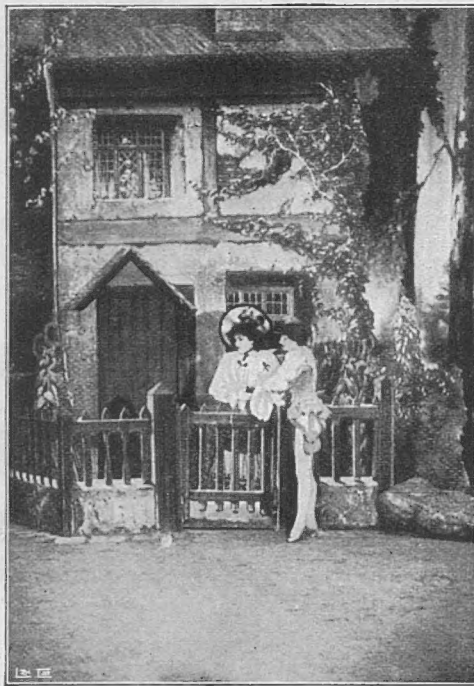
MR. PICTON ROXBOROUGH AS THE GIANT.



MISS BELFREY AS JACK.



MISS HELENE PILLANS AS THE MAN IN THE MOON.



MISS BELFREY AND MISS ST. CLAIR AS JACK AND GILL.



THE GIANT.

"JACK AND THE BEANSTALK," AT THE THEATRE ROYAL, MANCHESTER.

Photographs by R. Banks, Manchester.

ought to send a copy of Léon Daudet's "Shakespeare" to Mr. E. J. Lonnen, who is said to have been arrested by the Boers at Johannesburg. They seem to have found his *métier* dangerous as well as sublime. Perhaps they heard him sing "I'm a policeman with india-rubber shoes," and came to the conclusion that he was the most desperate conspirator against the Republic.

It is a dainty booklet. The title, it is true, does not fascinate one, "Practical Advice on the Preservation of the Respiratory Organs during the Winter Season and Bad Weather" (C. Mitchell and Co.). It is really, however, a capital collection of the work of the best black-and-white men—reproductions of drawings by Chérêt, Phil May, Greiffenhagen, Dudley Hardy, Raven Hill, Corbould, Beardsley, Pegram, A. Willett, and others of almost equal fame, each and all inspired to portray the value of Géraudel's Pastilles. The art of the poster is well established among us, and it is interesting to observe that those drawings which are intended for display on a large scale on hoardings do not suffer at all when presented in the size of a pamphlet-page. Chérêt's sketch may be reckoned among the most brilliant achievements of this great artist. Of

and literary enemies, and gives some account of his grievances against the world and Society. All Verlaine's posthumous works are, it appears, the legal property of the late poet's son Georges, now a soldier, and the youth to whom he addressed some touching lines. Verlaine's grave continues to be daily visited by many of his would-be disciples and admirers.

Quite a number of notable "Authors" gathered together to hear Mr. Hall Caine discourse on Canadian copyright. Apparently, one touch of lucre makes the whole world kin, for a more varied assemblage of writers has rarely been seen gathered together to hear another discourse. To quote but a few, the author of "The Black Cat" sat next "Father O'Flynn"; the almost sardonic look of Mr. Anthony Hope was in quaint contrast to that of Sir Walter Besant, whose ruddy, kindly face reflected nothing of the troublous episode which has lately convulsed the Society. Mr. Edmund Gosse, Mr. Zangwill, and Mr. Rider Haggard represented three very different schools of thought and literature; but, with one or two solitary exceptions, Mr. Hall Caine's audience appeared heartily satisfied with the efforts he had made on their behalf.

The Transvaal business will continue to occupy a large share of public attention until the fate of "Dr. Jim" is decided. Below I reproduce the proclamation issued by Sir Hercules Robinson warning "Dr. Jim" to desist. As one of the humours of the situation, I give a

reduced reproduction of a cartoon which appeared in the *Johannesburg Times*, suggesting how nurses may in future reach the seat of war.



THE UP-TO-DATE NURSE.

Cartoon from the "*Johannesburg Times*."

For some time past, Messrs. Donald Currie and Co. have shown considerable enterprise in the manner in which they keep South Africa and the Castle Line of steamers under the public notice. Among other measures to this end, they have recently issued a really admirable map of South Africa, suitable for clubs and other public places, as well as for the study or the office—a most useful map for all interested in South African affairs, whether business or political.

Mr. Somers Somerset's bride was, as Lady "Kitty" Beauchamp, not only one of the prettiest, but also one of the most

gifted of last season's *débutantes*. This is fortunate, for her husband's mother and grandmother are brilliant representatives of a family famous for its clever and good-looking women, and Mr. Somers Somerset has himself already shown signs of literary ability. In her mother the Duchess of St. Albans' *salon*, Lady Catherine Somerset has had many opportunities of meeting interesting political and social personalities, and rarely has a more representative assemblage gathered together than that which graced the youthful couple's wedding in St. Peter's, Eaton Square. The Priory, Reigate, where Mr. and Lady Catherine Somerset will spend the rest of the winter, is one of the finest old manor-houses in England.

PROCLAMATION.

PROCLAMATION BY

His Excellency the Right Hon. Sir HERCULES GEORGE ROBINSON, Bart., Member of Her Majesty's Most Hon. Privy Council, K.C.G., of the Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George, Governor, Commander in Chief of Her Majesty's Colony of the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa, and of the Territories, Dependencies thereof, Governor of the Territory of British Bechuanaland, and Her Majesty's Commissioner, &c., &c.

Whereas, it has come to my knowledge that certain British Subjects, said to be under the leadership of Dr. Jameson, have violated the Territory of the South African Republic, and have Cut Telegraph Wires, and done various other illegal acts; and

Whereas, the South African Republic is a friendly State in amity with Her Majesty's Government; and, whereas, it is my desire to respect the Independence of the said State.

Now, therefore, I hereby command the said Dr. Jameson, and all persons accompanying him, to immediately retire from the Territory of the South African Republic, on pain of the penalties attached to their illegal proceedings; and I do further hereby call upon all British Subjects in the South African Republic to abstain from giving the said Dr. Jameson any countenance or assistance in his armed violation of the Territory of a friendly State.

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN.

Given under my hand and seal this 31st day of December, 1895.

HERCULES ROBINSON,
High Commissioner.

By command of His Excellency, the High Commissioner,

BOWER,
Colonial Secretary.

PROCLAMATION AGAINST "DR. JIM."

Lady Henry Somerset inherited the property from her father, the late Earl Somers, and spends what scanty leisure she allows herself in a charming cottage built on the edge of the park, within a short walk of the beautiful house she gave over to her son on his marriage.

I have received a letter from a Spanish lady resident in Andalusia. She has some connection with Government circles in Madrid, and writes with authority about the great Cuban question. Judging by the tone of

her letter, Spain is in a bad way. The strength of the insurgents has grown with their success, the difficulties of the Spanish troops are enormous. The Cubans know every inch of the ground; they are inured to the trying climate; they are well equipped, commanded by resolute men, who have everything to gain and nothing to lose; and, above all, they are fighting for their liberty. Nobody can deny to the Spaniards the bravery which has ever been their just attribute, but, at the same time, nobody knowing the facts of the case can doubt that tyranny and misrule, extortion and oppressive taxation, have driven the Cubans to revolt. During the past year hundreds of young and gallant Spaniards, the very flower of the country's strength, have left home to die in Cuba fighting gallantly in an unjust cause. Marshal Campos may be recalled, more soldiers may be sent out; but, in the long run, I believe that Cuba will win, and that the Spanish Government think so too. It will be a long time before we learn the real truth about the losses already sustained by Spain. Yet there are plenty of men left ready to do battle for their country, and this reflection reminds me of a scene I saw in Seville in May last year.

It was about seven o'clock in the morning, and I was taking an early stroll on the Plaza Nueva before the heat of the day became intolerable. Suddenly I heard the distant sounds of music and the tramp of feet from



LADY CATHERINE SOMERSET.

Photo by Alice Hughes, Gower Street, W.C.

the direction of the Paseo, which runs by the side of the Guadalquivir. Soon the music resolved itself into a stirring military march; the rhythm of the tramp suggested soldiers, and presently a fine company swept past the square, with colours flying, music playing, and many officers splendidly mounted. The Plaza Nueva quickly filled with a crowd of the soldiers' friends and relatives, and with sightseers from the clubs on the Sierpes. "Where are they going?" I asked, and a very old Spanish woman, whose eyes were full of tears, answered, "To Heaven, signor." They were Spanish recruits for Cuba, and were going by rail to Cadiz, where the transports awaited them. The general feeling was that they were going to their death, but they marched away as happily as though they were simply going to duty at a *fiesta de toros*. When the music had died away and the bells had ceased from pealing, the old city settled down to its normal sleepy condition, and dozed through the long, hot summer day as though there were no such things as war and soldiers. Perhaps at the club cafés the state of affairs in Cuba was discussed, but the weather was too warm for animated discussion, and, moreover, there was to be a very big bull-fight on the following Sunday. In the silence of the ancient cathedral a few mothers and wives asked for the help of their patron saint, and that was all.

A series of admirable photographs of chrysanthemums, taken by Mr. J. White, of Lewisham, has been issued, in process-work, as an album by Mr. H. J. Jones, of Ryecroft Nursery, Hither Green, Lewisham.

The Burns Centenary Commemoration (July 21) will be celebrated in many ways over the world. Messrs. J. and M. L. Tregaskis will publish a new statuette of the poet, which has been specially modelled.



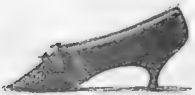
The figure is the work of Mr. Paul R. Montford, Gold Medallist of the Royal Academy. It is proposed to issue a limited number of copies of the statuette. The figure is seventeen inches in height. Great care will be taken to render each copy equal to the original, for which purpose every figure will pass through the hands of the sculptor. A limited number of copies will be issued in bronze and in terra-cotta. The bronze copies will be published at ten guineas, and the terra-cotta copies (white or pink buff) at twenty-five shillings each.

The Dumfries Burns Club intend to celebrate the Centenary, and invite all other clubs to assist. It is proposed to visit the Mausoleum, where wreaths will be deposited, and to hold a public conversazione, with Burns speeches and songs. The leading poets and writers of the kingdom are to be invited to attend.

Mr. H. J. C. Grierson, who gave the toast of "The Memory of Burns" at the dinner of the Edinburgh Ninety Burns Club last week, is Professor of English Literature in the University of Aberdeen. He comes of an old Shetland family, and had a brilliant career at Aberdeen University and at Oxford. He is an admirable speaker, and his enthusiasm for literature is quite infectious. He is in the early thirties only.

Will Trilbyism have the effect of improving our feet. Has it inspired, I wonder, a little booklet I have just read entitled "Try a Toe-Post," by Henry Holden, "shoemaker and truefooter," of 223, Regent Street? The Toe-Post is a very ingenious device for correcting the lamentable distortions so common in the feet of both men and women. It is a thin, vertical steel plate, covered with leather, which rises from the inside of the sole, and separates the great toe from the toe next to it, thus correcting the tendency of the great toe to become twisted round. Of course, "digitated" hosiery, having a separate compartment for the great toe, is also necessary. Mr. Holden claims that the Toe-Post is particularly useful for every form of amusement or business in which much time is spent in the open-air.

As a contrast to this, I can't help referring to the shoe of the Duchess of York, which all London raved about a little over a century ago, just as Trilby's foot is the rage of to-day. The Duchess, you remember, was a daughter of Frederick William II. of Prussia, and married the Duke of York, son of George III., in 1791. They did not hit it off, and soon separated, the lady retiring to Oatlands Park, Weybridge, where she amused herself with her pet dogs, and died in 1820, seven years before her husband. Her shoe was a marvel in miniature.



THE DUCHESS OF YORK'S SHOE.

The illustrated magazines of the day gave pictures of it, one of which I am able to reproduce here. It was made of purple Spanish leather, with a pink rose and tambour front, variegated with white, green, and pink. The heel was also pink, its height being two inches and one-eighth. The tread of the heel was nearly an inch in the widest part, and was shaped somewhat like a horseshoe; the widest part of the sole did not exceed an inch and three-quarters, and the girth of the largest part of the foot was six inches and three-quarters. The length of the shoe from the seam behind to the extremity of the toe was eight inches and three-eighths, so the length of the lady's actual foot was probably an inch and a quarter shorter. But all this is too prosaic.

O tiny shoe of purple hue!
O faded little rose!
'Tis sacrilege to write of you
In fashion-plated prose.
A triolet, a villanelle,
A rondeau were more meet
To paint the dainty little shell
That kissed my lady's feet.

'Twas oft engraved, for London raved
A season in delight,
And ne'er a street seemed fitly paved
For feet so small and slight;
The town forgot to ponder Fox,
Nor scanned the speech of Pitt,
And Burke went down before the frocks,
And shoes none else could fit.

But brief your sway, you passed away
From fickle fashion's range,
And in our calm and prosy day
You seem grotesque and strange—
The relic of a bygone time
That knew not Nature's laws;
A peg on which to hang a rhyme,
Or hygienic saws.

The Board of Education of the Town of Philadelphia have given information upon literary pelfia. It seems that Mr. Kipling has such terrible "profanity," that to give him to a stripling would be nothing but insanity. And then they say that "Trilby" is a mass of "immorality," and thus they have decided now to banish such banality.

The souvenir which Mr. Tree gave to the audience which witnessed the hundredth performance of "Trilby" is the most artistic thing of the kind I have seen, consisting of seven photogravures by Messrs. John Walker and Co., taken by Mr. T. C. Turner, of Hull. There have been bulkier and gaudier souvenirs in theatredom, but none so chaste as this.

"Sell's Directory of Registered Telegraphic Addresses for 1896," now in the eleventh year of its publication, and the third year in its practically complete form as compiled from Official Lists supplied by the authority of the Postmaster-General, contains a very large number of alterations. Upwards of twelve thousand new registrations, cancellations, and other alterations have been received from the Post Office, in addition to an enormous number of trades, professions, and telephone numbers included in the alphabetical lists; making together upwards of thirty thousand individual alterations. The fact that the fifty thousand firms whose names appear transact sufficient business to render it necessary for them to register abbreviated telegraphic addresses for the convenience of their correspondents, renders the book invaluable.

Mr. J. Alfred Spender, the new editor of the *Westminster*, comes of a stock which is partly medical, and partly literary. His father and both grandfathers were doctors; his mother wrote novels for thirty years; his uncle, Edward Spender, founded the *Western Morning News*, in conjunction with another uncle, the late William Saunders, and was one of the earliest and most successful writers of that indispensable piece of journalism, the London Letter. Mr. J. A. Spender is thirty-three, and was educated at Bath College and Balliol College, Oxford. On leaving the University, he began the career of a journalist at Hull, where he edited the *Eastern Morning News* from 1886 to 1891. That paper was then the property of Mr. Saunders. Mr. Spender left Hull to join the staff of the *Echo*, from which he



MR. J. ALFRED SPENDER.

THE NEW EDITOR OF THE "WESTMINSTER GAZETTE."
Photo by Russell, Baker Street, W.

migrated to the *Pall Mall Gazette* as assistant-editor under Mr. E. T. Cook, with whom he seceded when the *P. M. G.* was bought by Mr. Astor. On the *Westminster Gazette* Mr. Spender has done much excellent work, notably the "Philistine" papers on modern fiction, and a very able study of Jabez Balfour and the Liberator finance. He has published a valuable work on old-age pensions, and is engaged, in his leisure, on a history of the English village during the last hundred years. All this is a pretty full record for his age; and those who have watched his career expect great things from him in his new post.

At the Playgoer's Dinner several good stories were told. Among them was one quite new to me. It was told by Mr. Spence in responding for the Press. Speaking in reference to the comparative honesty of English and French critics, he said that, when in his bachelor days he travelled in France, he used to describe himself as "journalist" in filling up the answers to the hotel-keeper's list of questions, and he noticed that, though his clothes were decent and his luggage was heavy—chiefly with old pewters and brasses—the hotel-keepers would never accept his cheque. On his first expedition to France after his marriage, he was going to set down "journalist" as his profession, when his wife—partly French by birth, and, therefore, "in the know"—stopped him, and said, "Put *avocat* instead." He has followed her advice, and never since had any difficulty about getting cheques cashed.

Despite the foolish rumours of "chicken and champagne," I believe it may be said that the critics are an honest lot. It is the custom of Sir Augustus Harris at Christmas to send boxes of cigars to some of the play-tasters, but he well knows that such an effort at bribery, if it may so be called, "ends in smoke." This year I am told that another manager has been sending Christmas jars of brandy, and there is a story about that one critic who felt embarrassed, having drunk a good deal of the brandy before learning whence it came, saved the situation by promptly sending a handsome New Year's gift to the manager's wife. It is difficult to see how the managers would tackle the famous "G. B. S.," since neither game, tobacco, nor spirits are in his line. I can fancy his replying to such an offering that he didn't smoke, drink, or eat meat, and was not going to grow a new vice in order to be bribed. There is on record a critic to whom a Stilton was sent, who returned it, and, using a slang phrase then current, said it was a beautiful Stilton, but it was not "quite the cheese" to accept it.

The other evening I looked up a friend of mine in the West-End. He asked me if I would have some coffee. As it was close on midnight, I hesitated to trespass on his goodness, under the impression that he would have to ring up the housekeeper, and I said so. "Not a bit of it," he replied, as he lit a spirit-lamp to heat some water. He took two charming Dresden-china cups from his cupboard, and we both watched the kettle steam. Then he took a tin of a dark-brown, treacly looking substance, and transferred a teaspoonful of it to each of the cups. I watched the process with interest, as he poured on the hot water and gently stirred the liquid. He didn't even offer me milk or sugar, which struck me as being strange. After I had tasted it, he said, "Well, what do you think of that?" "First rate!" He said, "This is a new preparation of peptonised milk and coffee, made by Savory and Moore." Of course, I knew the famous chemists' peptonised milk, and peptonised cocoa and milk, but this preparation was new to me. I can thoroughly recommend it to everybody who likes a good cup of coffee—a difficult thing to get in this country.

I am growing tired of the constant talk of *matinée* performances given by London companies at immense distances. They remind one of

the rebuke offered to the man who had ridden an unparalleled distance on one horse—"What about the horse?" The managers make money directly and indirectly by these expeditions, but what about the players? To have to undergo two long railway journeys in order to earn a half-salary is not gratifying—for it is sometimes, if not always, "half-salary"; that is to say, if your salary is nine pounds a-week, it would be thirty shillings for a night performance or fifteen for a *matinée*.

A young actress of good standing told me the other day that her company went to perform a hundred miles away in the afternoon, returning to town for the night performance. "I wasn't allowed my dresser," she said, "on account of the railway fare, and I hate dressing myself. I detest railway travelling too; it makes me feel sick, and gives me a headache; that's why I won't join touring companies. When we got to the place, we began fifty minutes late because of trouble with the scenery; consequently, we hadn't time to dine there. Frantic telegrams to station-masters produced nothing; the train was late; we had to drive from the station to the theatre, and, except some nasty sandwiches, a bun, and the drink I sent out for, I had nothing till supper. The whole company played execrably: the audience ought to have had its money back; and I was ill for three days afterwards. I wouldn't go to Paris for one performance and rush back even for twice whole salary. I'm too bad a sailor." Who gains by these expeditions—the players inadequately compensated for their fatigue, the London audience that has a bad performance on the return of the jaded company, or the manager? I fear, only the manager.

If the ghost of the late William Shakspeare revisits "the glimpses of the moon," and interests itself in the immortal works left behind by his mortal self, the spirit in question should be strangely exercised just now. A Welsh lady has proved "conclusively" (to her own satisfaction) that the dramatist's plays point to his having been a Welshman; an English actor-manager has not scrupled to mangle the poet's greatest love-tragedy at a historic house; the critic of a

weekly paper has solemnly declared that Sir Henry Irving will produce "Julius Caesar" with a sort of co-operative cast of actor-managers, among whom the leading parts are apportioned in the strangest manner; and last, but not least, an American manager—who has before distinguished himself by collaborating with Shakspeare, much to that immortal's detriment—is reported to have calmly telescoped the first and second parts of "Henry IV." into one play, and is going to allow his leading lady to represent "Prince Hal"! This, if true, is surely a more solid grievance on which to go to war with America than the boundary of Venezuela. I have, in the distant past, seen Hamlet played by a woman—I believe it was by Miss Marriott in the early 'sixties; I have seen Romeo murdered in broken English by a foreign lady called Vestouli, and very distressing and unnatural performances they were; but Prince Hal to be played by a clever American *comédienne* out-Herods Herod! Seriously, it is time Mr. Daly gave up making patchwork of Shakspeare, and that leading ladies ceased to play male parts except in burlesque.



Designed by Albert Collings.]

[Produced by Carl Hentschel.

FRONTISPIECE OF THE MENU OF THE PLAYGOER'S CLUB DINNER.

Mr. Franklyn M'Leay, whose realistic and carefully thought out representation of Nero in "The Sign of the Cross" came upon the London theatrical world almost as a thunderbolt, is a Canadian, young and enthusiastic, and with an intense love of his profession, in which he modestly hopes "some day to be a help and ornament." Both, one can surely say he already is, for few artists come to dramatic work as thoroughly equipped as he did; for, while at Toronto University, he made a very special study of English literature, especially Shakspeare; and, meeting that sterling old American actor, Mr. James E. Murdoch, he went with him to Boston, and there, in the "Hub" of all that is literary and artistic, he gave three lectures a-week for a whole season. It was during this time that he attracted the notice of Mr. Wilson Barrett, who at once offered him an engagement, and with Mr. Barrett he made his first professional appearance, at the Shakspeare Theatre, Liverpool, in "Claudian," playing the steward who ushers in the Tetrarch; but it was only a few months before he was given the part of the villainous old ruler. Mr. M'Leay was born at Watford, Ontario, coming of good old Scotch stock; and, being intended for law and politics, before he became an actor he had a very hard struggle with "family scruples," for he had never visited a theatre more than half-a-dozen times, and his parents went for the first time to "the playhouse" to see their son play Iago, a son of whose achievements, theatrical though they be, they are now very proud. After studying at Toronto University, he graduated with a scholarship and as a First-Class man in Modern Languages and English, and, after

leaving, was an Examiner on the Board of Education for Ontario, for he was, and is, still deeply interested in all educational systems and movements, as well as having written for the *Forum* and other magazines. Besides his literary achievements, he was no mean athlete, being captain of the Champion Amateur Football Team of America; a great baseball player, for to his energies in the latter game his hands even now give ample testimony; and he was also a famous sprinter. Since joining

Mr. Barrett, he has played some forty rôles, the most conspicuous among them being Iago, the Bishop and the Deemster in "Ben-my-Chree," the Tetrarch in "Claudian," the Ghost in "Hamlet," Dentatus and Appius Claudius in "Virginus," and Father Christmas in "The Silver King"; but his favourite parts are his present one and the Bat in "Pharaoh," the latter being as marvellous a performance artistically as physically, and one, it is hoped, that Londoners may be able to see. During Mr. Barrett's last season in the States, Mr. M'Leay had been persuaded to sign a contract to "star" in "A Modern Mephisto," under one of the leading New York managers, but,

wishing to come to the "actor's Mecca," he was allowed to withdraw; for, with the instincts of a true artist, he prefers to do more hard and earnest work under and with capable actors to "starring" himself, and he is grateful to have remained so long under so able a chief as Mr. Wilson Barrett, his first and only manager. In private life, Nero is a fair, tall, slight man, with the keenest perceptions of both character and humour. He is still a student, and is living in dear, delightful Bloomsbury, that he may make deeper studies in physiology at the British Museum.



MR. FRANKLYN M'LEAY AS NERO.

Photo by Downey, Ebury Street, W.



MR. FRANKLYN M'LEAY.

Photo by Chickering, Boston.



MISS VESTA TILLEY AS ROBINSON CRUSOE AND MISS RAY MASKELL AS THE PRINCESS, AT THE PRINCESS THEATRE, MANCHESTER.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY LAFAYETTE, DUBLIN.

"THE SIGN OF THE CROSS," AT THE LYRIC THEATRE.

Photographs by Messrs. W. and D. Downey, Ebury Street, S.W.

Marcus ...	Mr. WILSON BARRETT.	Ancaria ..	Miss ALIDA CORTELYON.
Nero ...	Mr. FRANKLYN M'LEAY.	Daones ...	Miss LAURA JOHNSON.
Tigellinus...	Mr. CHARLES HUDSON.	Julia ...	Miss CECILIA WILMAN.
Licinius ...	Mr. EDWARD IRWIN.	Cyrene ...	Miss GERTIE BOSWELL.
Glabrio ...	Mr. AMBROSE MANNING.	Edonie ...	Miss ALICE GAMBIER.
Philodemus	Mr. T. W. PERCYVAL.	Zona ...	Miss BESSIE ELMA.
Metellus ...	Mr. G. BERNAGE.	Catia ...	Miss M. SHATTINGER.
Signinus ...	Mr. D. M'CARTHY.	Mytelene ..	Miss ROSE PENDENNIS.
Servilius ...	Mr. HORACE HODGES.	Favius ...	Mr. ALFRED BRYDONE.
Strabo ...	Mr. MARCUS ST. JOHN.	Titus ...	Mr. STAFFORD SMITH.
Viturius ...	Mr. C. DERWOOD.	Melos ...	Mr. PERCY FOSTER.
Berenis ...	Miss MAUD HOFFMAN.	Stephanus ..	Miss HAIDÉE WRIGHT ;
Dacia... ..	Miss DAISY BELMORE.		and
Poppea ...	Miss GRACE WARNER.	Mercia ...	Miss MAUD JEFFRIES.

On the first night of the new play there was difference of opinion as to the merit of "The Sign of the Cross," but there was unanimity as to its



STEPHANUS (MISS HAIDÉE WRIGHT).

"I serve my Master."

Photo by Barrauds, Limited, Liverpool.

certainty of success. It will draw the ordinary playgoer and attract the extraordinary, was the view of an excellent judge. The reason is not difficult to see. The piece, even if weak as a play, was certain to excite great curiosity as the first of what might be called modern religious drama, and it is only just to say that it is an excellent melodrama. One could wish that Mercia would let the audience into the secret of her love for Marcus Superbus somewhat earlier, could desire that there were more space devoted to the actual love-theme, less to the "fill-up" historical scenes and the intrigue of the somewhat uninteresting Berenis; yet, beyond dispute, there is matter moving to most people in the tale of the maiden martyr. Mr. Wilson Barrett has long enjoyed a reputation not only as an actor, but as a valuable cause of acting in others. One expected his Marcus to be a powerful, picturesque performance, and few felt disappointment; it may be noted with regret that something of indistinctness has come to mar his elocution, and it is to be hoped that he will cure this, as he easily may. Miss Maud Jeffries has such charm and dignity that, "without prejudice" to "The Sign of the Cross," one wishes to see her in a better, more exacting part. The "hit" of the play is the acting of Miss Haidée Wright, whose force and sincerity make her little part of great value. Mr. M'Leay gives a remarkable picture of vice and malignity in the part of Nero; and Miss Warner is charming as poor Poppea. This is hardly the place for general criticism of the work that is drawing the un-playgoing public, and therefore one must silence the instinct for finding fault. Cruel

things have been said, and said cruelly, by sincere critics concerning "The Sign of the Cross"; but even the harshest must admit that the work is interesting, and therefore the entertainment must repay those who go to the theatre. Moreover, it is permissible to hope that some of those who pay their first visit to the theatre in order to see Mr. Wilson Barrett and his play will be induced to modify their views concerning the drama generally, and extend their acquaintance with the stage by honouring the other playhouses with their presence.

Miss Haidée Wright comes of a theatrical family, her father, Mr. Fred Wright, being one of the pioneers of touring in the provinces. One brother, Fred, is a member of the "Artist's Model" company of Daly's Theatre; another played in "The Foundling" at Terry's Theatre, and a third has been touring in South Africa, while her sister is also on the stage. She "starred" as a child-actress in the provinces in parts of every sort. Later on, in Mr. Osmund Tearle's company, she appeared as Juliet, Desdemona, and in many other familiar rôles. Two years ago Mr. Wilson Barrett engaged her to join his company then on tour in America, where she was Mrs. Haller in "The Stranger," as well as taking other characters. When Mr. Barrett was playing "The Sign of the Cross" in America, he cabled to Miss Wright offering her the part of Stephanus, which she immediately accepted. The young actress likes her trying rôle immensely, and, concerning the heartrending shrieks which have raised quite a controversy, confided to me that, to her, they do not present a difficulty. "I have a short interval behind the scenes," explained Miss Wright, "which I employ in imagining how I should feel on the rack, and I work myself up to such a pitch that the cries I utter come very naturally to me. I am very sensitive to pain, and have a nervous dread of having a tooth drawn, or suffering from sea-sickness. If I know that I have to suffer, half the pain for me lies in the anticipation."

The young actress has hitherto made only one appearance in London, which, curiously enough, was also at the Lyric Theatre. The occasion was a lengthy *matinée* in the sacred cause of charity, but, the programme being filled to overflowing with good things, the pretty little one-act piece timed for four o'clock was deferred and deferred, till, at six o'clock, the disappointed young aspirant had the sorry satisfaction of addressing herself to rows of empty stalls. But even then, as Miss Wright comically relates, there was an "amber girl" sitting in the wings, nursing a poodle and cheerfully waiting her turn, though she had arrived at an early hour and had occupied her coign of vantage, dressed for her rôle, from the commencement of the *matinée*.



MARCUS (MR. WILSON BARRETT).

"What this Christianity is I know not."



NERO.



MARCUS.

"Mercia renounce her faith? That she will never do."



MERCIA (MISS MAUD JEFFRIES), AND STEPHANUS.

"Come, Stephanus, come!"



STEPHANUS.

"What is thy name, boy?"—"Stephanus."



MISS GRACE WARNER AS POPPEA AND MR. FRANKLYN M'LEAY AS NERO.

NERO : *Virtue is one part vanity and the rest hypocrisy.*



CHRISTIAN MAIDENS.



BERENIS (MISS MAUD HOFFMAN) AND POPPEA.

"Empress, how I thank thee!"

PATRICIAN LADY AND SLAVES.



PATRICIAN LADIES.



POPPEA AND NERO.

"Here's treason, foul treason, toward our sacred selves!"



BERENIS, POPPEA, AND NERO.



BERENIS, NERO, AND POPPEA.

"Then let him die, and die this day."



BERENIS, POPPEA, AND NERO.

"I am Nero!"

THE BOOK AND ITS STORY.

THE CULT OF THE ILLUSTRATOR.*

That the illustrations of a modern book may be worthy of being ranked as serious works of art beside the masterpieces of etching and engraving, is an opinion not yet accepted generally. Mr. Pennell, who is nothing if not a vigorous champion of a minority, has, in "Modern Illustration," advanced this claim, and proved it in a way that leaves little room for doubt. Hitherto, the glamour shed upon an etching by Rembrandt or an engraving by Bartolozzi has been withheld from wood-engravings and process-blocks of recent date. Now we are told that lovers of art may find little masterpieces in many a neglected volume. Collectors of certain books have, indeed, for a long time paid very high prices for volumes illustrated by a few modern artists. But it is evident that, in doing so, they have been attracted by many other qualities rather than by the art of the pictures. Bewick, one of the much-collected, was, says Mr. Pennell, "an artist who appeared to engrave his designs on wood instead of drawing them on paper," hence he is rightly honoured

as the man who revolutionised the art of illustration in England; but the claims of other men, whose works are equally prized by collectors, he recklessly sets aside. "I suppose," Mr. Pennell writes, "that, among artists and people of artistic appreciation, it is generally admitted by this time that the greatest bulk of the works of 'Phiz,' Cruikshank, Doyle, and even many of Leech's designs, are simply rubbish, and that the reputation of these men was made by critics whose names and works are absolutely forgotten"—which is a bold sentence to print; yet it is one that it goes without saying has much evidence to justify it.

Thus it is clear that, writing as an artist for artists, the standard of



A PEN DRAWING.—R. ANNING BELL.

excellence adopted in this book by no means coincides with the standard of market value that has grown up in late years. For it is to the golden decade of English illustration, from '60 to '70, that Mr. Pennell turns for the neglected masterpieces, and his capable and sound argument should arouse a new quest among collectors, this time not for "curios" but for intrinsic works of art. It has been well said that a future historian of English art in the nineteenth century will find its most notable achievements not so much in galleries or museums as in the pages of its current literature. Of old it was the church or the palace that nurtured the best art of its contemporaries; now it is the editor of a popular periodical who sways the destinies of artists, and confers patents of nobility upon them, or rather, gives them the chance to win for themselves undying laurels. But it must not be thought that the author of this readable book is anxious to exalt the illustrator at the expense of the painter: his plea is rather to merely rank him as an artist when he deserves that high honour. For Mr. Pennell is too sane to think that the accident of material affects its art. A painting may be bad, a process-block good art; yet the reverse is equally likely.

To help outsiders to appreciate what artists of all schools find worthy is Mr. Pennell's aim; and, despite all due respect for his knowledge and clear insight, one hardly expected so much catholic appreciation, so many different styles, from a draughtsman who is so thoroughly a representative of a very definitely restricted school. Yet, even if it is evident that some of the later pre-Raphaelite artists—those of *The Dial*

group more particularly—fail to interest him as much as others perhaps less worthy, such a personal equation is rarely allowed to influence his criticism. English, Continental, and American draughtsmen, especially the latter, are duly selected for praise, and specimens of their work reproduced in liberal quantity. Book-lovers, after reading this carefully,



A FIGURE FROM "THE DANCE OF DEATH."—JOSEPH SATTLER.

will be delighted to discover among the volumes on their shelves all sorts of books destined to become valuable—the two volumes of poems by Mr. Robert Buchanan, for instance, because of their illustrations—and the sets of *Once a Week*, *Good Words*, and many of the quarto table-books long since banished from the fashionable drawing-room. In fact, Mr. Pennell has herein started a new hobby for collectors, and those who buy and those who sell—especially the latter—should rise up and call him blessed. That Fred Walker, Pinwell, Boyd Houghton, Sandys, and the rest had already hosts of loyal disciples who prized eagerly any scrap of their work, is true. But in advancing the claim for these and others to be ranked as masters, Mr. Pennell, if he echoes the opinion of artists, is one of the first to prepare a formal statement of the case, and for this artists and collectors will alike accord him hearty thanks. The excellently printed and profusely illustrated book reflects credit on author and publisher alike, and should mark an epoch in the popular appreciation of the artist as illustrator.



A HEAD.—RAFFAELLI.

* "Modern Illustration." By Joseph Pennell. London: George Bell and Sons.

A NOVEL IN A NUTSHELL.

THE TRIUMPH OF BARKER.

BY GILBERT BURGESS.

His real name was Barker. To a large section of the public he was known for a few brief weeks by the somewhat florid *nom de guerre* of "Paul Coligny." But that was during the period of his triumph. For many years Barker had contributed much towards the gaiety of the nation by the composition—words and music—of many of those fascinating specimens of art which are known as music-hall songs. Who does not remember "Come along with me, boys!" "Fanciful Flossie," and that masterpiece, "Stand me a drink, and I'll pay you to-morrow"?

But the success of these works was nowise to be compared with that obtained by the one which made (and undid) him in a very short space of time. Barker, taking him all round, was a fairly intelligent, indifferently educated man, of the type that the School Board is beginning to produce. Despite the influences of his youth, he was curiously nervous and sensitive.

He was the possessor of a little house at Surbiton which suited him admirably, also of a little wife who loved him and thought him a genius, which is even better. True, he was ill paid for his work—one song for one sovereign was the Alpha and Omega of his business prospectus—but he contrived to turn out the commodities so rapidly that his income was by no means despicable. And there were ulterior compensations. The whistling of the street-boy, if he but whistled one of Barker's melodies, was a great joy. And think of the honey of the barrel-organ!

One morning Barker awoke with a start, and, while he was dressing himself, there came into his eyes for a moment the nearest approach to a look of inspiration that had ever lingered there. At breakfast, a meal which he much enjoyed, seeing that he was a married man and of sober and staid habits, his wife noticed an unusual abstraction in his expression.

"What is the matter, dear?" said she.

"Charlotte," replied Barker gravely, "our fortune is made."

"You don't say so!" ejaculated his better-half.

"Yes, our fortune is made. Last night I had a wonderful dream. In my imagination, I saw a theatre filled with people." (Barker always preferred to describe a music-hall as a theatre.)

"The stage-footman came forward and changed the numbers at the sides of the proscenium, and I noticed that it was number thirteen. I referred to my programme, and, to my astonishment, saw that Alfred Richards, the great comedian, was announced to sing, for the first time, a new song—'words and music by Paul Coligny.'"

"What did we have for supper last night?" murmured Charlotte reflectively.

Barker was hurt.

"My dear girl," he said, "please don't interrupt until I have finished my story. Richards came on and sang my song. The audience simply rose at him. There never was such a success; the gallery-boys continued to sing the chorus long after he had finished. The manager heard by chance that I was in front, and a messenger came to me and asked me to go on the stage."

"Dear me!" said Charlotte.

"Much against my will, I obeyed the imperious command of the audience. The footlights in front of me seemed like an aggressive line of fire, and I could only see the people in the stalls through a haze; still, I managed to make my bow."

"But it was only a dream," commented Charlotte, with a sigh. "Isn't it a pity, Harry," she continued, "that dreams *never* come true?"

Barker drew himself up in his chair, with the air of one who is conscious of having happened upon a certainty.

"Curiously enough, my dear"—this with a slightly sardonic tinge—"this dream *will* come true. I distinctly, note for note, harmony for harmony, remember the melody and orchestration of the song."

"Harry!"

"Yes," he continued, "and I shall spend this morning writing them down. The words have escaped my memory, but the title remains fixed indelibly."

"What was it?"

Charlotte felt somewhat nervous. Her husband had been working too hard for the past few weeks, and, although she had very vague ideas as to the uses and potentialities of the human brain, instinct told her that there was probably a limit somewhere.

"The first line of the refrain was 'Um-ti-oodle-um.'"

"What on earth does that mean?" asked Charlotte.

"What does 'Ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay' mean, or 'Hi-tiddle-hi-ti'?" retorted Barker, quoting the titles of two well-known classics. "The main point, which you seem to have missed, is that it *does* mean nothing. If there were any definite meaning in the catch-phrase, where would the fun come in?"

"I see," said Charlotte. But she was not speaking the truth.

Barker spent all that day in the throes of composition; before nightfall his manuscript was completed, and he sang it over to Charlotte, who waxed rapturous over the melody.

"It is by far the best thing you have ever done, Harry," she cried. "Oh, I am so excited!"

The next day, Barker called upon Richards, the comic singer whom he had seen in his dream. He tried to restrain his excitement as he was ushered into the presence of the great man, who, it may be said by the way, was lolling upon a sofa. He was attired in a gaily striped flannel suit, and a very generous allowance of something-and-soda filled a tumbler on a table beside him.

"Excuse me gettin' up," said Richards. "Didn't leave the 'Thatch' till four this mornin', and I've got rather a head."

He did not drop his final "g's" because it was smart and fashionable—the habit dated with him from an earlier period, when it had quite a different significance.

"What have you brought? I haven't had a song that hit 'em for weeks. Sit down"—pointing to a piano—"and let's hear it."

Barker was trembling with nervousness, and he sang and played the first verse so badly that his hearer was not visibly impressed. But, when the refrain commenced, Richards raised himself on one elbow and listened intently.

"Play it again," he said; "it's rippin'!"

And again and again Barker played it, until the comedian sprang up, and, bending over the manuscript on the piano, added his lusty tribute to the feast of sound. Barker, flushed and expectant, waited for the verdict upon which so much depended. Richards gave him an exultant thump on the back, and said—

"Barker, my boy, it is simply immense! It will be all over London in a week. I'll buy it right out." He drew forth a sovereign-case from his waistcoat-pocket. "Let's see. A guinea's your price, isn't it?"

"Usually," replied Barker; "but not this time. I believe in the song, and I'm going to publish it myself. You can stand in, if you like."

Richards, for all his blatancy, was no niggard (as the records of the Court of Bankruptcy can testify), so he readily assented to the proposition.

"All right, old man, make your own terms. I'll bring out the song at the Eldorado on Monday."

Barker, head in air, hastened home to his wife.

The eventful night arrived. The Eldorado was crowded, and there was just enough tobacco-smoke in the air to make it pleasantly fragrant—for those who like the smell of tobacco.

Richards appeared on the stage, and was warmly greeted, for the wag was very popular. He always repeated the refrain of a song twice after each verse, so as to emphasise its merits; but the success of "Um-ti-oodle-um" was so immediate, so absolutely assured, that the audience called him on again and again, so that he might repeat his enchanting lay. Barker and his wife sat together in the stalls, and when the tumult had finally subsided she, after a cautious glance around her, timidly pressed his hand.

"Dearest," she whispered, "I am so proud of you!"

Her husband went round to the stage-door to speak to Richards. The great man was jubilant to excess, and the inevitable bottle of champagne was ordered and consumed.

The next day Barker went to a music-publisher, and arranged that the song should be brought out as quickly as possible, he paying all expenses.

That evening he bought the *Piccadilly Gazette*. He turned to the column where music-hall notes were usually to be found. He started with surprise and pleasure. The article was headed with the name of his song in large capitals. He read the notice feverishly—

At last Mr. Alfred Richards has hit upon a song that has absolutely no vulgarity in it. . . . It is safe to say that never, in the halls of variety, has been heard such a charming, fascinating melody. . . . The orchestration is, perhaps, not so good, and the words are even below the average. . . . But before the singer had finished, the tune, with its irresistible lilt and swing, had conquered everyone. I learn that the composer is Mr. Paul Coligny, who, although he has done good work in his own particular line, has never before revealed the possibilities of his talent. . . .

And so on. Barker was in a seventh heaven of delight. He never decried or sneered at musical criticism, as most composers do, for he had once met a critic who had studied music.

In due time the song was published, and the first edition was exhausted in a week. Barker was inundated with commissions for work from other comic singers; paragraphs about his personality appeared in the halfpenny evening papers; his portrait was printed in the *Entr'acte*—in fact, Fame had at last crowned his head with her sweet laurels. But they faded all too soon.

One morning, while Barker was invoking the Muse, he was disturbed by a furious knocking at his front door. In a few moments, Alfred Richards, displaying symptoms of apoplexy, burst into his room.

"Confound you!" he shouted. "You've done it this time!"

"Done *what*?" asked Barker, in a tone of bewilderment.

"Read this!"

Richards forced into his hands a weekly society paper.

"The musical article, I mean," he added.

Barker skimmed through it: "Opera at Covent Garden, the Richter Concerts, Herr Pleyfuss's Second Pianofore Recital . . . Paul Coligny"—his name at last. And this is what he read—

I have, by chance, happened upon the most barefaced, impudent fraud that has ever been perpetrated in the musical world—if one allow that the Variety Theatre belongs to it. The other night I went into the Eldorado for half an



MDLLE. MARTHA IRMLER, THE NEW PREMIÈRE DANSEUSE AT THE EMPIRE.

hour. There I heard a song that bears the sufficiently banal title of "Um-ti-oodle-um." The music seemed almost brilliant (of its kind), but it struck some chord in my memory. It is always irritating to be haunted by a melody, and yet not to know what the melody is. I knew I had heard it before, but I could not tell where. When I arrived home that night, I went through the scores of several of the lesser-known opéra-bouffes. In Offenbach's "Geneviève de Brabant" I found "Um-ti-oodle-um." The next day I bought Mr. Paul Coligny's version, and found that the entire melody and refrain had been stolen from Offenbach. Mr. Coligny's accompaniment is somewhat different, inasmuch as he is guilty of several grammatical mistakes which the French master could never have committed. These facts need no further comment from me; the question now is, What have the holders of the English copyright to say?

The paper fell from Barker's hand, and he turned a ghastly white. He looked at Richards piteously, and said nothing.

But his companion felt no compassion, and, as he turned to go, said brusquely, "You've played a low-down trick on me, Barker. There's sure to be an awful row about this business—shouldn't be surprised if it led to the police-court. Of course, I can't sing the beastly thing again. But I can promise you one thing—you'll never do another song for me."

He went out, slamming the door behind him. Barker, with the air of one in a dream, sat down at his writing-table. Suddenly, he realised what had happened; he put his head upon the table, and sobbed like a child.

The door opened.

"Harry, Harry! what is the matter?" cried his wife, as she flew to his side and put her arms around him. "Tell me—you can tell me, can't you?"

"That paper, on the floor, read it," he answered in a muffled voice, without looking up at her.

There was silence in the room save for the rustle of the pages as his wife looked through the paper.

"I can't see anything that concerns you," she said.

He rose and walked towards her unsteadily. Taking the paper from her, he read the fatal paragraph aloud to her, in a quavering voice.

Something came up into her throat, and for one quick moment she doubted him.

"What does it mean?" she asked.

"It's true what the critic says," he replied.

Then his grief changed to impotent anger—anger with himself.

"Fool, fool, fool!" he cried. "I now remember where I heard the melody. It was at a Promenade Concert, years ago. . . I had completely forgotten it, until it came back to me in that cursed dream. Am I to blame? Am I?"

"Of course not, dear. It was accident. One can't account for it." And his wife, though she felt the disappointment as keenly as her husband, smiled at him.

"You must write to the papers and explain."

"I can't," he said; "nobody would believe me—I shouldn't have believed it if it had happened to anyone else. We are ruined."

He sat down, resting his head upon his hand. His wife crept up behind him. She placed one arm round his neck and kissed him.

"But I believe you, Harry. Isn't that enough?"

The affair made a considerable sensation at the time; the song was withdrawn from sale at the demand of the publishers who owned the copyright. However, they did not think it worth while to bring an action for damages, and "Paul Coligny" was soon forgotten.

From morning to night there stands behind the counter of the "Boys' Hosiery" department at Evans and Robinson's a worn, weary-looking man. He performs his duties with apathetic regularity, and is considered by his employers to be quite a type of faithful, unambitious trustworthiness. His fellow-clerks have grown weary, by this time, of torturing him by humming and whistling the refrain of "Um-ti-oodle-um."

THE NEW BALLET AT THE EMPIRE.

I am glad that there is no tradition concerning Empire ballets like that which applies to the Drury Lane pantomime, and that, therefore, I may seem sincere in saying that "La Danse" is one of the prettiest ballets I have seen. The ordinary ballet can be hardly more than a pretext for the introduction of dances, and Madame Katti Lanner has ingeniously given a dramatic turn to her pretext. With some appearance of logic, dances and dancers of several periods and lands are introduced, and the marvellous colour-instinct of Wilhelm has enabled him to blend the costumes in schemes of much originality and great beauty. It is a pity that Mdlle. Zanfretta in the Terpsichore has to whiten herself, since it robs her expressive face of its charm. Luckily, she is untrammelled in her dancing, which, as usual, is graceful, and has a touch of individuality. After the Taglioni in the ballet costume of 1845, it may be hoped that we shall have no more of the very ugly sunshade-skirts used of late by the *prima ballerina*—skirts that make the dancer look ludicrous when she walks and much detract from the apparent grace of her dancing. Mdlle. Martha Irmeler, the Terpsichore, a dancer new to London, had not enough to do to prove her quality, but it is clear that she has technical skill and grace, as well as beauty. Mr. Will Bishop some day will make a great hit with his comic dancing, which, as compared with that of others, is as comedy to farce. His pretended difficulty in altering the form of dance to suit the rapid changes of style in the orchestra was decidedly droll. Mdlle. Cora is a dainty little body, who seems to add an idea of acting to skill in her art. However, the true value of "La Danse" is in the concerted

pieces admirably performed by the splendidly dressed ladies of the ballet. It is noteworthy that during the past few years the standard of dancing of the rank-and-file has wonderfully improved; their work used to be a weak point at the Empire, and now that is altogether changed. I wonder whether men could be taught to do the complicated manœuvres which seem to give so little trouble to the ladies. I doubt. Mr. Ernest Ford is generally more successful in passionate music than in playful, and "La Danse" is always playful; yet his music is of no little charm—there may be some lack of originality in the themes, but they are handled very prettily, and many have great life. By-the-bye, it hardly seems worth while to introduce Mdlle. Sallé, and yet give so little of her. She is, perhaps, the most interesting woman in the history of the ballet, having regard to her supremacy as dancer, her efforts at reform in dress, and her friendship with half-a-dozen of the great *littérateurs* of the reign of Louis—le Roi Soleil—to say nothing of the illustrious Locke, whose name we all know so well, whose works so ill. Mdlle. Irmeler is a typical exponent of the German school of dancing. Most of us nowadays profess to have little liking for the work of a *première*, no matter how clever she may be. It is vouchsafed to Mdlle. Irmeler to bid us mend our ways and think differently. She graduated in Dresden, and has won many triumphs in St. Petersburg, Hamburg, and Cologne. At the New York Opera-House Mdlle. Irmeler stayed nearly five years. She had an exciting time of it in the great Boston fire, escaping eventually, but not till after her life had been in extreme danger. Still, her long stay in the States gave her many reasons for loving the Americans, and they appreciated her work.

THE LATEST IMMORTAL.—ANATOLE FRANCE.

The latest addition to the ranks of the Forty has well earned his place among the French Immortals, for Anatole France is justly considered by his own compatriots—and whatever else the literary Frenchman he not, he is a born critic—as among the worthiest upholders of the greater tradition of French literature. He at no time belonged to *les Jeunes*; he was a Professor before he became a critic, and a poet before he developed into the great novelist he has since revealed himself. It

now seems scarcely credible that the author of "Thaïs" first made his reputation as a story-writer as the novelist of the Young Person; charming though it was, "Le Crime de Sylvestre Bonnard" gave no hint of the extraordinary power possessed by the writer, or that he would ever stand first among French latter-day short-story writers.

M. France has a curious and striking personality. His early training has stood him in good stead, and he is, in the best sense of the word, a scholar. When writing "La Rotisserie de la Reine Pedauque," one of the most extraordinary reconstitutions of mediæval Paris ever made, he did not use a single book of reference; and in his latest important contribution to French fiction, "Le Lys



M. ANATOLE FRANCE.

Photo by Reutlinger, Paris.

Rouge," he proved his versatility by dealing both with Italian art and with the *fin-de-siècle* Parisian society to which he has lately found his way, and where he has been more or less lionised. Most of his readers will regret his abandonment of his older manner, for "Le Lys Rouge" recalls, though it does not imitate, Bourget's psychological studies. Renan always predicted a great literary career for Anatole France, and the then young Professor was one of the historian's most devoted disciples and friends.

Since he has become famous, M. France has moved his household gods, which include some fine specimens of Italian art, to Passy. His villa is situated in one of the quiet, countrified little streets close to the Avenue du Bois de Boulogne, and his tall, lean figure, surmounted by a Socratic head, and clothed in the somewhat dandified garments affected by most of the successful French *littérateurs* of to-day, may often be seen pacing up and down one of the less-frequented paths of the wood. He is a hard worker, and his rare holidays are always spent in Italy. Speaking Italian like a native, he has always made it his special delight to seek out the cities and villages of rural Umbria generally left aside by the tourist. When not wandering, knapsack on back, over the country districts, he stays at Florence, a welcome guest in the literary colony he has depicted so vividly in "Le Lys Rouge."

THE ART OF THE DAY.



PORTRAIT OF SIGNORINA E.—GIOVANNI BOLDINI.

ART NOTES.

The extremely sad death of Lord Leighton at his London residence on Saturday, Jan. 25, has taken the world by surprise. It was known, indeed, that during recent months the President had suffered somewhat severely from affection of the heart; but since his return to England he has been seen so frequently at various public functions, looking so well and full of life, that all hoped the worst had passed. He himself shared the same conviction; and, indeed, it was only on the Wednesday before his death that, returning from a drive, he realised the desperate nature of his illness. During two days his sufferings were acute, and were only relieved by chloroform. It is pathetic that almost his last words—not absolutely the last, as has been recorded—were to send his love to the Academy.

Lord Leighton held a position in the social world which was so inextricably bound up with his artistic life, that it is difficult to separate the two. It is certain that he leaves no successor who can ever fill the ample and distinguished position which Leighton claimed as a certain right. His own art, apart from his position, was very dear to him. Moreover, it partook of the nature of his own distinction. It was stately, noble—the work of a man with fine ideals, and with a horror of anything that was vulgar or unrefined. It was, to an incredible degree, an art of preparations; and Leighton has left nothing so interesting, it may be said, as his great studies. From the first, he pursued his own personal and individual course—a course of fulfilments. He never submitted experiments to the public eye.

He was, in a sense, intolerant; he disliked the matter-of-fact in art; he came near to hating pure realism. Yet his exquisite sense of justice never led him into intolerant oppositions. He made no secret of the fact



A BULLOCK-CART.—E. A. NORBURY.
Exhibited at Messrs. Graves' Galleries, Pall Mall.

that the Newlyn School was distasteful to him. Yet, when the time came, and there was no doubt about the general sentiment, he even favoured the elections of Mr. Stanhope Forbes and Mr. Frank Bramley to the Associateship of the Academy. In a word, Lord Leighton was a man of rare generosity, of splendid social instincts, of distinguished art, and of almost regal sentiments.

Mr. Sainton's Exhibition of Water-colours at the Fine Art Society's, which he is ambitious enough to christen "Studies in the Real and Ideal," is pleasing, but not satisfying. His idealities are somewhat too voluptuous; his realities do not give you a true idea of realism. In a word, there is a possible air of flimsiness brooding over the whole exhibition. At the same time, we are compelled to acknowledge the beauty of this artist's colouring, and the exceeding gratefulness of his line. The fact seems to be that Mr. Sainton's energies do not go far enough towards the accomplishment of their own possibilities. He prefers to keep them so far upon this side of violence that certain cavillers might be disposed to call him weak. This he is not; but he should avoid overdoing his tendency towards mere prettiness, as a boy is warned to avoid that detestable gift, boyish rhetoric.

Mr. E. A. Norbury's collection of pictures at Messrs. Graves' galleries is full of character and vitality—two qualities which, in these days of dulness and indifference, are extremely gratifying to encounter. We reproduce in these columns three representative specimens of his brush, of which "Buffaloes and Rice-Plough" is, perhaps, the best. The beautiful vegetable growth, the eccentric trees, the fine stateliness of the staring animals, and the shining background make a delightful composition, for which the resources of black and white are not altogether adequate. "The High Priest's Car" is a bit of national life caught on the wing during a most picturesque moment. We scarcely

know to whom we are paying a compliment when we say that this religious procession reminds one of nothing so nearly as a wanderer out of Gilbert and Sullivan's "Mikado." The sunlight of the work is



BUFFALOES AND RICE-PLOUGH.—E. A. NORBURY.
Exhibited at Messrs. Graves' Galleries, Pall Mall.

admirable, and the solemnity of the whole ceremony is admirably captured as a pervading sentiment. "A Bullock-Cart" is a somewhat more audacious conception; but it is successfully carried out. The animals are admirably drawn, and the stiff, unemotional figure of the driver is a fine bit of character.

The first number of *Architecture*, an illustrated monthly magazine, shows fine promise for its future. It is well printed, well illustrated, and full of interesting matter. The first article deals completely and well with the work of Norman Shaw, giving various illustrations of his work, and an account of his life, methods, and achievement. A charming article on Westminster Abbey follows it, containing some admirable drawings by Mr. Herbert Railton; in connection with the same paper a photograph of the roof of Henry VII.'s Chapel is given, which, in its way, is a triumph of ingenuity. Articles on George Edmund Street, by his son, on "The Renaissance in England," and on "The Country House," complete a most promising number.

The late Mr. Carlo Giuliano, of 115, Piccadilly, has bequeathed to the South Kensington Museum a very valuable collection of jewellery, consisting for the most part of gold ornaments, decorated with minute granulations after the Greek and Etruscan fashion. One of the necklaces has fifty-two amphora-shaped pendants, and is most delicately enriched with no less than 157,580 tiny gold granules. There are also some examples of enamelled jewellery, notably two flower-necklaces, further ornamented with pearls and brilliants.

Messrs. C. and A. Giuliano, the sons of the late Mr. Carlo Giuliano, have very generously added to their father's splendid bequest not only a very beautiful crystal case, but also a small reproduction in gilded bronze of the beautiful statuette of Victory found at Pompeii and now in the Museo Nazionale at Naples. These admirable specimens of the goldsmith's and jeweller's art are provisionally exhibited in a separate case in the South Court of the South Kensington Museum.



THE HIGH PRIEST'S CAR.—E. A. NORBURY.
Exhibited at Messrs. Graves' Galleries, Pall Mall.



THE 5th (ROYAL IRISH) REGIMENT OF DRAGOONS, 1793.

DRAWN BY R. CATON WOODVILLE.



5th ROYAL IRISH LANCERS (SERVICE REVIEW ORDER), 1895.
DRAWN BY R. CATON WOODVILLE.

ABOUT POSTERS.

The Exhibition of Posters which was held last year at the Aquarium was so successful that a second show is being organised by Mr. Edward Bella, and will be opened in March. The Spanish and American sections



POSTER OF "CHARLEY'S AUNT."

Reproduced by permission of the publishers, Messrs. Wetters, Ltd.

promise to be excellent, and the English one especially fine. The interest in posters is growing, though little is known about them by the general public.

The biggest posters to be seen on London hoardings are, of course, put together in sheets. The largest size of poster measures thirty feet by twenty, and is technically known as a "twenty-four"; that is to say, it consists of twenty-four separate sheets, each of which is called a "double-crown." Of these, there are three rows of eight, and, if there is letterpress at the top and bottom of the picture, the number of pieces is thirty-two. There are variations, of course.

For a big theatrical production, about five thousand "six-sheet pictures" are ordered from the advertising agency, and from two to three thousand "twenty-four sheets." This is for London alone; for the provinces there is a separate big order. The Adelphi first announces a new play by a huge piece of letterpress; the pictures come later. For this year's Drury pantomime there are four separate posters; Mr. Oscar Barrett seldom affects a picture, generally keeping to letterpress.

The posters are printed from lithographic stones, the biggest requiring about twelve to each colour. The next in size requires about eight; but now that several colours can be printed at one "pull" (i.e., impression), the number is being greatly reduced, and consequently a great deal of time is saved in production. The most elaborate posters formerly required five or six printings before the desired effect could be attained. Of course, this simultaneous printing of several colours is by no means general even yet.

The rent of hoardings is often almost fabulous, and in some places exceeds the cost of producing the posters thereto affixed. The advertising agents confess to a very pardonable pride in any specially good position, and when it is decorated with a particularly striking "exhibition," as they call it, the show is photographed not only as a memorial, but as a further advertisement, for even advertisements must be advertised.

As may well be supposed, the big advertising firms have in their employ an army of bill-stickers, yet, considering the size of London, and the acres of hoarding to be decorated, the number is not so great as one might expect. One of the best-known firms employs 110 bill-stickers, who are at work practically day and night. One of these decorative

artists is considered to have done an average day's work if he sticks three hundred "double-crowns"—say, roughly, ten of the largest-size posters—on low positions, or two hundred "double-crowns" on high positions. But, of course, consideration is given to the length of his round, and the distance he has to travel between the "exhibitions," where he "skies," "floors," and "hangs on the line." The use of the old-fashioned bill-sticker's wheel-barrow is now entirely discontinued. In ordinary weather, a poster will last three weeks, but a gale of wind and rain will make an end of it in one night.

There is a "Hanging Committee" to this wayside Academy. A special body of censors "sit on" every poster on behalf of the advertising agents, and many pictures are ruthlessly condemned, if they are in themselves suggestive, or if a wanton boy could by a stroke make them so. Some pass the censors, but are afterwards withdrawn, in deference to a revised opinion; notably a famous one representing a "painter's palette," behind which some lynx-eyed critics declared that impropriety lurked, although there was really nothing there. It was too absurd altogether! And the agents have other troubles, for a poster that looks well and striking when laid out on the floor indoors may look very different on the outside wall; may, in fact, prove a sad fraud. Moral: let them start an experimental hoarding.

One of the great authorities on posters in this country is Mr. Bella. It is he who supplies the English amateur (who is usually an artist with a good lofty studio) with specimens of this latest development of the art; and, if you be a manufacturer in need of a striking advertisement for your wares, he will find you a design and see that it is executed in the proper manner. Furthermore, in his character of manufacturer of *confetti*, those pretty substitutes for rice at weddings, he has lately produced a little poster by Lautree which is a model, alike in charm and in its tendency to attract attention, of what such things should be. Naturally, therefore, it was to him that a *Sketch* representative went, the other day, when he desired information as to what has come to be called the artistic poster.

He found the subject of his interview in the act of despatching several parcels of English posters to divers collectors on the Continent, and began to interrogate him forthwith.



POSTER OF "MRS. PONDERBURY'S PAST," AT THE AVENUE THEATRE.

Reproduced by permission of the publishers, Messrs. Waterlow and Sons, Ltd.

"Why is it, Mr. Bella," he said, "that most of the posters one sees on English hoardings are so ugly—and so foolish as advertisements?"

"It is all a question of price," was the answer. "You cannot persuade the average Englishman that, having resolved to advertise extensively, he may as well begin by procuring a form of advertisement that shall be effective. The ordinary design is made by a man who gets paid a small salary, and is required to turn out just so many posters as his firm may be able to dispose of. The cost of the original design in

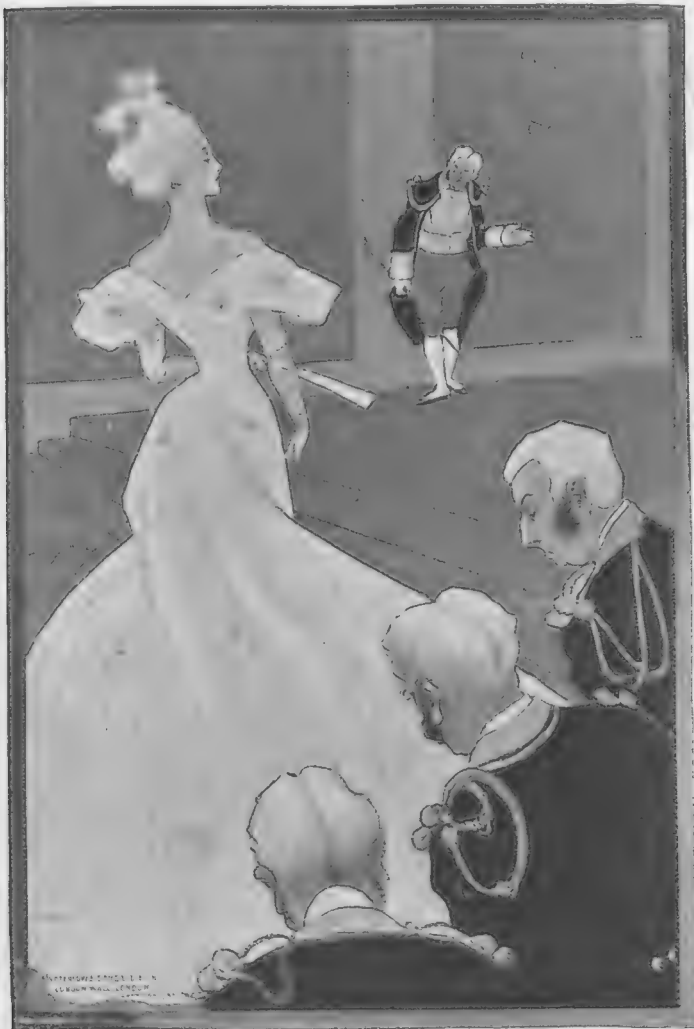
of the wares of the same firm. I fancy the advertiser would admit that the small one is at least as striking as the other, and therefore worth a trifle more in the beginning, because it produces the same effect and costs just half as much in rent of hoardings. Then, again, posters are ineffective in England, because, even where an artist has been got to design them, he is not usually supposed to know the effect he wants to produce or how it will be best produced. He makes the thing three feet high, and it is brought out ten feet high; he makes a figure considerably over life-size, and when, at last, he manages to discover his work on the hoardings, it has been reduced by more than a half. Look at these posters, for example."

Mr. Bella here hunted out Mr. Walter Crane's champagne poster, and the loveliest of all posters, Bonnard's "La Revue Blanche," with its mystical, black-caped woman, and diabolical street-urchin.

"At a lecture on the poster, the other day, both these were mentioned. You see that they are perfect as they are, and as they were designed. But the lecturer had had them photographed, and proceeded to throw them on a screen by means of a lantern. They were then shown as about ten feet high, and the effect was simply atrocious. I might name other cases more familiar, but the simple fact remains that, if an artist designs a poster, he should know the size in which it is to be reproduced."

"How about collectors of these artistic posters?" asked the interviewer. "They are getting numerous; are they not?"

"Oh!" said Mr. Bella, with something of the look of a modern Lot in London, "there are none—in England. Over in France there are many, and they grow more and more numerous every day. In America there are lots, and in other countries a few. But here in England—Well, would you expect to find collectors of artistic posters in a country where the hoardings are like ours?"



POSTER OF "CINDERELLA," AT DRURY LANE.

Reproduced by permission of the publishers, Messrs. Waterlow and Sons, Ltd.

this case may be only a few shillings, and such a poster is, perhaps, most sensibly treated when it is printed in common ink. At any rate, the manufacturer finds, on inquiring, that he can have this sort of thing produced at, say, a penny a sheet. Now, the artistic poster may cost from twenty to a hundred pounds, in the beginning, for the mere design. That staggers the advertiser at once; he does not realise that, for the production of a picture which shall stand out boldly upon the hoardings, an artist is as much needed as for the painting of an ordinary landscape for the adornment of a house in which people are to live. Again, a good poster requires to be well treated in the reproduction. In a recent case with which I had to do, for example, the difference between the contract prices for a big edition was very largely accounted for by the fact that the lower-priced poster would have cost the producer sixty pounds less in ink alone than the one I was personally interested in."

"And the result of it all was—?"

"The result was a very curious one, and worth mentioning, I think. The man who proposed to advertise had been shown a sketch, and was immensely struck by it. He would, doubtless, have adopted it had he not found that he could have a poster—of sorts—at a much lower rate. He then offered to take it if it could be done at the lower rate, and seemed to be vexed when he was assured that the thing was impossible. He remained impressed with that idea of possible cheapness, and refused to go any further in the matter. But he was also so much impressed by the design which could not be cheaply produced that he finally went without a poster at all. The man who wants things good, and yet does not wish to wander from the ideal of cheapness, is apt to end with a certain amount of indecision. But it is strange that this particular man did not realise that a thing which, to use a slang phrase, 'hit him in the eye' so decidedly was likely to have a precisely similar effect on the public he desired to impress."

"So it is all an affair of cheapness?" asked the interviewer.

"Not entirely. But, to return to that side of the question, even on the score of cheapness there are points about the artistic poster. Anyone can be impressive who has half an acre of paper to work upon and knows enough to use plenty of black and white. It takes an artist to make a smaller placard do the work of a big one. To take only a single case, there are two excellent posters on the hoardings just now, as advertisements



POSTER OF "ONE OF THE BEST," AT THE ADELPHI.

Reproduced by permission of the publishers, Messrs. David Allen and Sons,

IN SIERRA LEONE.

The Governor of Sierra Leone, Colonel Cardew, has already made himself very popular in the colony, especially since he returned from his first tour into the Hinterland, a journey which involved a great deal of



adventurous travelling and not a little exploration, for Sierra Leone is one of the few British colonies of which large portions still remain unexplored by European travellers.

The Governor and his party covered 617 miles, through wild and often extremely beautiful country, the route followed being through Waterloo, Mingreh, Konno, Kuranko, Warra Warra, and Tambakka. Those in search of adventure might do worse than follow Colonel Cardew's track. The country about Konno and Kuranko is composed of a series of deep gorges, lined with tall forest-trees shading rocky water-courses. Here, also, close to Kuranko, is to be found one of the most remarkable suspension-bridges in the world, the Yenketi, which spans the Bagweh and the Schli rivers. The bridge is constructed of coarsely interwoven canes, not unlike the letter V in form, and the sides are supported entirely by, and fastened to, immense trees growing on each bank of the river. The perpetual oscillating motion of the swinging open-work structure makes the passage of the bridge anything but an agreeable experience even to those rejoicing in the strongest nerves, the more so that the Schli, which is an affluent of the Kokel, is sixty yards wide, and has a swift, deep current. Our illustration represents the Governor about to cross the Yenketi, after his column of carriers have found their way over.

Colonel Cardew has also been busily bestirring himself with the suppression of the slave trade; but, as was to be expected, this time-honoured African institution is dying hard in Sierra Leone, and, even during his Excellency's tour, several instances occurred which proved quite clearly how very strongly the intervention of her Majesty's Government was needed in the matter. One slave-dealer, captured by the frontier police, proudly showed the Governor his stock-in-trade,



which consisted of a man, woman, and child, there being no relationship between the two adult slaves. Their temporary owner, who had been about to exchange them for cows at Susu, carefully explained that he had given eight pieces of cloth for the man and the woman, and two pieces

for the baby, each piece being probably worth three shillings of English money. He considered that this fact entirely absolved him from any act of fraud, and was both surprised and indignant when his victims were released and given their liberty.

Not the least interesting incident of Colonel Cardew's tour was his being met at Falaha, a place a hundred and fifty miles from Freetown, by a band of Mohammedans. The four lady singers of Falaha also turned out in state to meet his Excellency, assembling for that purpose round the "call" drum.

THE BRAVE BURGHERS OF CALAIS.

The siege of Calais is now commemorated in the nice old town by a grand statue. Every schoolboy knows the story of the six burghers: how at the desperate end of a year's siege they gave themselves up a vicarious sacrifice to Edward the Third's rage; how the King was for giving them short shrift, against the advice of his nobles, and was only turned to mercy by the intercession of Queen Philippa, who had just returned from fighting for him on the Scotch border. The story, a pretty one enough, depends upon Froissart and Jehan Le Bel. The former reports Eustache de St. Pierre as haranguing his fellow-citizens in this curious wise: "Gentlemen, both high and low, it would be a very great



THE BURGHERS OF CALAIS.

pity to suffer so many people to die through famine if any means could be found to prevent it; and it would be highly meritorious in the eyes of our Saviour if such miseries could be averted. I have such faith and trust in finding grace before God if I die to save my townsmen that I name myself as first of the six." As a specimen of the fourteenth-century idea of heroism—and theology—that is not bad. But whether the thing ever occurred outside Froissart's vivid imagination is another question. Thomas de la More, with whom Knighton agrees, so far from reporting cruelty, declared that Edward enriched the burghers "with large gifts." Robert of Aycsbury, who is minute in describing the siege, does not mention their being condemned to death, nor does Gilles de Muisit, said to be a contemporary, and writing in a neighbouring town. The curious thing, indeed, is that, while English historians have generally been inclined to accept the story, French writers are much less ready to pass St. Pierre and his colleagues as authentic heroes. Some of them directly allege that he was a traitor, bought in advance by the English. Edward Fournier, in his "Esprit dans l'Histoire," scouts "le prétendu dévouement d'Eustache de St. Pierre." M. Levesque, in "La France sous les Cinq Premiers Valois," writes: "Froissart alone among his contemporaries relates this remarkable fact, and the simplicity of the style may give even to fable the appearance of truth. The action of these six men was sufficiently great to have been trumpeted through all France. It was, however, unknown in the capital, or the 'Chronicle of St. Denis' and other contemporary histories would not have been silent on the subject, as they are."

There is little evidence for the story; yet there is no great improbability in it, for Edward's French campaigns were no exception to the cruel methods of the time. In this case, however, there was no slaughter, although the English had good reason to be angered with Calais, an obstinate antagonist and a notorious pirate-haven. After the passing of five centuries, a mythical hero serves all the purposes of a real one—the sculptor's purposes better, perhaps, even when his methods are as "realistic" as Rodin's. Who grudges the Calaisians their love-feast? Certainly not we English. Since the days of cruel Edward and gracious Philippa, we have become more and more insular in our European relations. No Englishman covets Calais to-day, and it had been better had we never set foot in the domain of the brave burghers.

THE LIGHT SIDE OF NATURE.



A PRETTY WIT.



WHAT ARE WE COMING TO?—CAMERA FIEND TAKING A RECORD SNAPSHOT.



MISSIONARY : And what will you do, John, when I am gone ?
CHINAMAN : Me chin-chin (worship) my own joss (god).



ENTERPRISE.

"'Ello, Sal, 'ave yer set up on yer own? I-thought you was gettin' on so nice at the match factory."
 "Well, yes, 'Liza, so I was; but 'Sooner reign in 'ell than serve in 'eaven' is my motto."

A BOOKMAN'S PARADISE.

A CHAT WITH MR THOMAS J. WISE.

It would seem that until the literary man has become a book-hunter he cannot realise the full "blessedness of books." Doubtless, there are scoffers who declare that book-hunting is only another form of the postage-stamp mania, and in some cases, one must admit, the sneer is justified; but there is a form of book-hunting which the student of literature cannot afford to neglect, and that is the intelligent collecting

which leads to discoveries in literary history. Among collectors whose systematic method exalts this pursuit into a practical science, one of the foremost is Mr. Thomas J. Wise, book-lover, bibliographer, friend of authors, possessor of practically the finest collection of first editions of modern English authors, and, withal, busy City man, for Mr. Wise's achievements have been the work of his leisure moments.

In response to Mr. Wise's kind invitation (writes a *Sketch* representative), I made a pilgrimage to Hornsey, for Mr. Wise, like so many literary men, has his abode on the northern heights of London, and spent a delightful evening with the great collector among his treasures.



MR. THOMAS J. WISE.

Photo by the Delmer Photographic Company, Holloway Road, N

It requires little persuasion to get Mr. Wise fairly mounted on his hobby, and his fund of information and anecdote seems inexhaustible. To every volume and manuscript hangs a threefold tale—concerning the book, its author, and its passing into the present possessor's hands.

"I may fairly claim," said the bibliophile, as he made some selections from his shelves, "to possess the most complete collection of first editions of English authors, beginning with Blake. But, of course, I have earlier examples, some of them very remarkable." Mr. Wise placed an old brown volume on the table, and, keeping his hand upon it, asked me a question: "You know the lines beginning—

Three poets in three distant ages born,
Greece, Italy, and England did adorn?

Well, here is a first edition of 'Paradise Lost,' with that epigram on Milton written upon the fly-leaf in John Dryden's own hand, and with his signature. When the book was put up to auction, I was lucky enough to be the only person who detected the genuineness of the inscription, and determined to have it, at all hazards. Curiously enough, the catalogue described the book as 'defaced by writing in contemporary hand.' When the book became mine, the British Museum authorities verified Dryden's handwriting for me; it is a pity they could not do the same for the verses signed 'A. Marvell,' on the other leaf. As for the edition, it is unique among first editions of Milton, as it combines the first title-page and additional leaves with the 'Arguments,' which do not otherwise appear together.

"And here," continued Mr. Wise, "is a still earlier curiosity, a first edition of the 'Faery Queene,' which contains supplementary leaves, sonnets, and dedicatory verses, not otherwise bound up with this impression. Here, you see, on the title-page, twelve books are referred to, that being Spenser's original scheme, which was never completed. The bookseller who brought the book under my notice was deluded by this into a queer blunder. He notified me of a first edition of the 'Faery Queene,' which, unfortunately, contained only six of the twelve books."

"You were well pleased to have the 'defective' copy, I imagine, Mr. Wise?"

Mr. Wise did not dissent from my suggestion, and we went on to consider the work of poets nearer our own time. Of the treasures of William Blake's brain and hand there are many choice examples. "Here," said Mr. Wise, handing me the volume, "are the 'Songs of Innocence.' Among these rare works I have some of the rarest—notably, 'There is no Natural Religion' and 'America.'"

As the conversation proceeded I began to realise the truth of Mr. Wise's remark that he could continue for a twelvemonth and yet require more time to tell me all the story of his collection; and as we had only a long evening for our chat, I begged my kind host to select from his shelves what he thought most interesting, and discourse to me of his deep knowledge thereon. Mr. Wise rapidly formulated a little scheme, and then proceeded. "Let us take something of Byron then.

Here is the work that preceded 'The Hours of Idleness,' 'The Poems on Various Occasions.' This is the excessively rare edition of 1807, not mentioned at all by Moore in the *Life* nor by Lowndes in his bibliography."

Mr. Wise took from its case a plain little drab-greenish volume with a pink-paper label. "The copy, you see," he continued, "is absolutely faultless, the paper as crisp as on the day it came from the press. You are interested in Shelley?" This case is entirely devoted to his works, and I have another of the same size with Shelleyana. Here's the 'Vindication of Natural Diet'; this is the first edition of the 'Adonais,' with Shelley's own handwriting on it, presenting the book to Thomas Love Peacock; and here is 'The Refutation of Deism,' of which only two other copies are extant, one of them in the British Museum. The copy in your hand passed, after Shelley's death, to his son, Sir Percy Florence Shelley, by whom it was given to Dr. Garnett, who generously handed it over to me."

"You have the original edition of the travesty of the 'Œdipus Tyrannus,' have you not?"

"Yes," said Mr. Wise. "Bibliographically, it is not quite so remarkable; but my copy has another interest. It belonged to Trelawney, who left it to his daughter, and her husband made it over to me. The 'Œdipus,' as you are aware, was suppressed by the 'Society for the Suppression of Vice.' This copy is in perfect condition; but here is something better still."

From various wrappings Mr. Wise took out twelve small leaves of MS., each leaf written on both sides. "This is the original MS. of 'The Masque of Anarchy,' the only complete poetical book of Shelley's that is entirely extant in MS. After Shelley's death this was given by Mary Shelley to Sir John Bowring, who bequeathed it to his son, Lewin Bowring, from whom I purchased it."

We talked for a little of the Shelley relics in the Bodleian. Then the conversation turned, naturally enough, on a poet who in several senses "lies near him."

"And of Keats?" I queried.

"I have everything," Mr. Wise confessed, "including the 1817 edition of minor poems. But I value most a large quarto letter, four pages of MS., signed 'John Keats,' and not the usual 'J. K.'"

"And here," continued Mr. Wise, producing a couple of thin quarto pamphlets, "are two most interesting first editions of poems by Coleridge. This one is the 'Ode on the Departing Year,' published in 1796, of which only two other copies are known. The other contains 'Fears in Solitude,' 'France,' and 'Frost at Midnight,' and is dated 1798. Have I any curiosity of Landor's? Yes, indeed. Here is the copy of the 'Simonidea,' privately printed at Bath in 1806, and afterwards suppressed. You know many of the Latin poems are distinctly erotic, and Landor wrote to a friend concerning the book: 'When you read the "Simonidea," pity and forgive me.' No, we mustn't linger over the verses now—another time; but I would just point out this stanza, which evidently contains the germ of 'Rose Alma.' And, by the way, the last page of the preface is worth noticing; you see it is autographed 'Landor.'"

"You would like to see something of Lamb's, I am sure? Well, I have one of his rarest—the actual first edition of 'Prince Dorus,' published in 1811, of which I have never seen a copy in any catalogue or auction-room."

After I had examined the little book of the unfortunate Prince, with its quaint illustrations of his facial calamity, the talk drifted to book-hunting, and Mr. Wise filled up a pleasant interlude with romantic tales of the chase; but, regarding these, he bound me over in a cigar to hold my peace. Some day, it is to be hoped, he will give them to the world.

Then, to bring back the conversation to the actual volumes, I remarked, "You are particularly strong on Browning, I believe, Mr. Wise?"

"These are the sheets of my 'Browning Bibliography,' which will contain three hundred pages, and every book there mentioned is on my shelves. Here is the copy of 'Bells and Pomegranates' given by Browning to Carlyle. The inscription runs, 'Thomas Carlyle, Esq., with R. B.'s affectionate respects and regards.' Then," continued the bookman, opening a morocco case and drawing out a plain little volume, "this is 'Pauline,' written when Browning was a lad. His aunt gave him thirty pounds to print it; the printing took twenty-three pounds and advertising the other seven. Not one copy was sold. Read what Browning wrote for me on the fly-leaf—

I see with much interest this little book, the original publication of which can hardly have cost more than has been expended on a single copy by its munificent proprietor and my friend—Mr. Wise.
Feb. 12, 1888."

ROBERT BROWNING.

The cost was too delicate a matter for inquiry, but it is well known that an example was recently bought by Mr. Slater for £63, so the poet's comment cannot be wide of the mark.

"With this," continued Mr. Wise, "it is appropriate to mention 'The Battle of Marathon,' written by Mrs. Browning at the age of fourteen. Three copies only are extant. And here is a very, very rare edition of the 'Sonnets from the Portuguese,' which were privately put into type in 1847, probably at the suggestion of Mary Russell Mitford. The book, you see, is marked 'Not for publication.' These famous sonnets were not given to the world until the two-volume edition of Mrs. Browning's Poems appeared."

Then Mr. Wise produced Ruskin's 1850 "Poems," Tennyson's first work, "Poems by Two Brothers" (1827), and one of the late Laureate's rarest works, "The Window," printed by Sir Ivor Bertie Guest, the

THE CARL ROSA OPERA COMPANY IN LONDON.

A CHAT WITH THE MANAGER.

The experiment of bringing opera to London for morning performances only in the season when the Spirit of Pantomime has usually ruled supreme, is a daring and interesting one. It has been crowned with success, and, in order to learn something about the arrangements of the



MISS MINNIE HUNT AS GRETTEL.
Photo by Langflet, Glasgow.

company, I recently called upon the manager, Mr. T. H. Friend. As may be imagined, he is a very busy man, but experience teaches me that really business-like people can always spare a few moments for a definite purpose, and the manager of the popular opera company at once placed his time and facts at the disposal of *The Sketch*. I found him in his private room at Daly's Theatre, surrounded by papers of every description, which he was tackling with the courage of a brave man.

"This is a new departure, is it not," I began, "to give opera in the morning only? On whom do you rely for your chief support?"

"It is an experiment," said Mr. Friend,

"and one that the growing appreciation for opera seems to justify. The people round London are nearly all fond of music; but the inconvenience of coming up to town in the evening is very great, and in the regular season they are usually compelled to leave the opera-house before the performance is ended. To them these morning performances will chiefly appeal. Nearly seventy-five per cent. of our patrons are of the fair sex, because men cannot leave their work; but there are more than enough lady patrons of opera to fill Daly's Theatre every afternoon of our visit, which must be a short one, on account of provincial engagements. We cannot desert the provinces for long even to perform in the Metropolis."

"The Carl Rosa Opera Company has done a great deal for music in the provinces," I remarked. "Can you tell me if the standard of appreciation has been materially raised during recent years?"

"The spread of musical taste is nothing less than wonderful," replied the manager, with what was almost a chuckle of satisfaction. "I've been in this business for nearly forty years, and I have seen the progress that has been made. I well recollect the time when a twenty-pound house was considered very fair—something that a manager should not grumble at. Nowadays people flock to the opera, and, what is even more important, they understand what they hear. They will not be contented with one 'star' performer and an indifferent company; they require a well-trained and properly conducted orchestra and a thoroughly efficient choir. Look at the success of 'Hansel and Gretel.' It was the reception of Humperdinck's opera that decided us to give these *matinées* for the people who came in crowds to see the pretty piece in London. A number of ladies' schools used to send a company of the pupils to see 'Hansel and Gretel'; and we shall give several operas that are not often heard in London. If the experiment is a successful one, we shall make this an annual visit."

"Judging from one of your remarks," I said, "you do not rely upon any single 'star' artist?"

"No," was the reply; "we do not. You know the composition of our company. All our artists are good, tried performers, and they are familiar with every note of the operas in which they take part. Mesdames Ella Russell, Zélie de Lussan, and Alice Esty are best-known to Londoners, and a Metropolitan success will hardly be a novelty to men like Ludwig, Hedmond, Barton McGuckin, and Alec Marsh. Moreover, we can fairly claim the *ensemble* that results from our people having worked together for so long. It is a great help in opera to keep the same company together for years at the time. There are faults in all new performances that can only be toned down by constant and complete rehearsals, that speedily become an impossibility when the principals come and go. Hedmond left us for a time, but has rejoined the company for a couple of seasons."

"How about your conductors?" I said. "Do they give satisfaction to critics as well as public?"

"I am glad to be able to say 'yes,'" replied Mr. Friend. "Mr. Claude Jaquinot is an excellent musician, and holds the orchestra together admirably; while in Herr Richard Eckbold we have a musician who played in Wagner's orchestra at Bayreuth, and has the almost interminable

difficulties of the Wagnerian scores completely under control. His training, added to great natural gifts, makes him a very valuable addition to our company."

"There is one point that rather puzzles me," I said, "and that is the question of setting the stage. I know by experience that the setting of 'An Artist's Model' is heavy, and almost cumbersome. How and when do you effect the necessary changes?"

"After the performance is over for the night," said the manager. "As soon as the people have left Daly's, at a little after eleven, our workmen are busy with the alterations; and in the afternoon, when our show is over, we clear the way for 'An Artist's Model,' between five and eight o'clock. It is, of course, very heavy work, but that can't be helped. We have the great advantage of not needing rehearsals, or the setting would become a problem. As it is, the operas are familiar to all who take part in them, and, indeed, most of the chorus and orchestra is permanently attached to the Carl Rosa Company. Moreover, in Mr. Brooklyn we have a stage-manager of great experience, and you can quite imagine that travelling from town to town throughout the provinces sharpens men's wits and makes them quite ready to meet and cope with any emergency."

Since having this chat with Mr. Friend, the experiment of the Carl Rosa Company has been proved successful, and has drawn enthusiastic and crowded houses to Daly's Theatre. It is bound to do good to the regular opera-season, for people having heard certain operas in English, will be all the more ready to hear them in the native tongue. Altogether, we may look forward to an additional pleasure in town life at the festive season, for there is little doubt but that the Carl Rosa Opera Company will return to us another year. Who can say but that at some time in the near future we shall justify our claim to be considered a musical nation? In any case, the present movement is a step in the right direction, and, as such, claims the support of all musical amateurs.

By the way, Miss Minnie Hunt, the very pretty and clever young soprano who has lately made so great a success with the company, as the Shepherdess in "Tannhäuser" and Michaela in "Carmen," as well as in other rôles, is now only just twenty, though she has been sailing under the flag of her present company since 1891. Then she was specially engaged for the "Carmen" company, to play Michaela to the Carmen of Madame Marie Roze; but, at the close of that season, she joined the Royal Carl Rosa Opera Company, and has been with them ever since, this being her fourth season. With them she has been a most delightful Arline in "The Bohemian Girl," Madeleine in "The Postillion of Longjumeau," the prettiest of Amabels in "The Golden Web," and a charming Suzel in "L'Amico Fritz," a rôle she took up at only



MR. BARTON MCGUCKIN AS FRA DIAVOLO.
Photo by Langflet, Glasgow.

twenty-four hours' notice; but she thinks Gretel is her best part, for she is quite devoted to the heroine in Humperdinck's dainty children's opera. Miss Hunt is a Londoner, and received the whole of her scholastic training at St. Mary's Church School, in Battersea, but she owes her musical tuition to her father, who is a great lover of music.

THE "ENGLISH ILLUSTRATED MAGAZINE."

THE WAR IN CUBA.

The most jaded reader of periodical literature will find much both to amuse and interest him in the February number of the *English Illustrated Magazine*. Of topical and lasting value to stage-folk and playgoers alike is C. H. Dene's account of "Mrs. Stirling, Play-Actress," an article illustrated with some charming early portraits of the late *comédienne*. Apropos of Mrs. Stirling's portraits, it is worthy of note



THE LATE MRS. STIRLING.
From an Engraving by R. Lane, R.A.

that her own hangs as a companion picture to Mrs. Keeley's in the Garrick Club. The illustrated interview consists this month of a chat with Mr. and Mrs. Beerbohm Tree, and a description of their delightful house in Sloane Street, a *locale* rarely described by the interviewer.

Lovers of "Our Village"—and surely they must comprise all those belonging, by courtesy, to an older generation, in addition to any young people who have had the free run of an old-fashioned library—will delight in the vivid descriptive article entitled "In Miss Mitford's Country." Three Mile Cross, a hamlet three miles from Reading, is the spot which was immortalised by the genial maiden lady whose home it was for so long. Mr. Holland Tringham's illustrations prove that "Our Village" has not lost its quaint and old-world charm. The letterpress includes a description of Swallowfield, the place where Miss Mitford spent her later life, and where she died early in 1855, just forty-one years ago. Other



THE COTTAGE AND VILLAGE STREET, THREE MILE CROSS.
Drawn by Holland Tringham.

contributions consist of a good store of fiction, each story complete in itself; a description of the daily life and ways of the pitman, giving many glimpses of "how the other half lives," by G. E. Mitton; Mr. George Clinch signs an article concerning the Arcades and Bazaars of London, accompanied by reproductions of a number of curious old engravings; Mr. Grant Allen discusses an Altar-piece of Perugino's; and Dr. Andrew Wilson tells his readers all about jelly-fish.

In these days of raids, rebellions, wars, and rumours of wars, everything is of interest which in any way touches on the disturbances, or threats of disturbances, which at present seem springing up in every part of the globe; and, though most of us are content to rely upon the reports contained in our newspapers, there is something particularly fascinating in talking to a man who has seen some of the fighting. It was with this idea that I had a chat (writes a representative) with Mr. E. Henry Davies.

"How did you find travelling in Cuba?" I inquired.

"Well, under the existing circumstances," he replied with a laugh, "it was far from agreeable. Havana itself was swarming with badly clad, slovenly soldiers, while the cafés were filled with officers, among whom I observed, in the uniform of a corporal, a son of the late Marshal Bazaine. At the time of my visit, the streets of the town were most gorgeously decorated in honour of the arrival of the Spanish troops, who, as they landed, were escorted through the streets in triumph. As a mining engineer, I had to see some particular mines, and my destination lay between the ports of Manzanillo and Santiago de Cuba. I could have travelled part of the distance by rail; but, as all civilians had been politely warned by the rebels that the railway traffic was liable to interruption, not to say danger, I decided to patronise the rail as little as possible, and so proceeded by it only as far as the port of Batabarro, some two hours south of Havana. From Batabarro I proceeded by steamer, which was crowded with troops, and the company was decidedly mixed. In the first cabin we had the Archbishop of Santiago de Cuba, with two attendant priests, three Generals, and a numerous staff of officers of all degrees. Steaming eastwards along the coast, between it and the outlying coral islands, we were not long before we saw evidences on the shore of the rebel troops, though, much to our relief, and, I expect, especially to the satisfaction of the military men on board, we found we were at a safe distance. On the very first morning out, we passed a band of some five hundred rebel cavalry on a foraging expedition, if one might judge from the cattle they were driving in front of them. Cienprejos, once a thriving town in a large sugar-planting district, was reached the same day. All the plantations were then lying idle, as the owners were too frightened to work them. Some of them, I learnt, had ventured to start in defiance of the rebels, but only to find their plantations fired and destroyed. Of this we saw on our return a striking example, and the several thousand acres of cane on fire really formed a sight of the most awful grandeur, rivalling the forest fires in America.

"We called at several small ports for the purpose of landing or embarking troops, while one morning we were delayed for some time while the Archbishop, with some officers, went on shore to hold Mass. After the ceremony, they all spent the rest of the day in gambling, smoking, and drinking. I may say that we were none of us sorry to part with these gentlemen, which we happily did the very same evening, when we went on shore at Manzanillo. Manzanillo is a typical town of Old Spain, and is notoriously dirty. It consists of a collection of houses, surrounded by cafés, with the jail and the military club, while outside these comes a semicircle of forts, looking like windmills without sails. The forts were situated a gunshot apart, connected by a barbed-wire fence, put up for the purpose of impeding any sudden advance of the rebel cavalry. The rebels all round here were exceedingly active."

"I suppose you had no trouble with the Spanish authorities?"

"Not until I reached Manzanillo," he replied. "Not only was permission refused me to pass through the Spanish lines, but it was broadly hinted that I was looked upon as an American spy. It would have been possible to get through without this permission, but not to get back again, so I decided to go round the coast to Santiago de Cuba and consult the British Consul there. Before leaving, however, I made a flying visit to a plantation a few miles along the coast, and arrived at the end of a skirmish between the Spanish troops and the rebels."

"Did you actually see fighting, then?"

"Oh, yes; but there is little to tell, for these skirmishes are usually nothing else but traps laid to catch small detached parties of troops, with the object of depriving them of their arms and ammunition; and so cleverly are these traps laid by the rebels that, so far, they seem to have succeeded on every occasion. The wounded and prisoners are always sent back to the Spanish lines, and, to the credit of the rebels, it should be recorded that they are never ill-treated. This cannot, however, I am sorry to say, be said of the Spaniards, and the rebels who fall into their hands have a very bad time of it."

"Well," I said, "and what will be the end of it all?"

Mr. Davies looked unusually serious as he replied, "It is difficult to foresee. The rebels are not only masters of the interior of the island, but, by frequent skirmishes, they are endeavouring to weary the Spaniards and exhaust their exchequer. They are not only capital fighters, but excellent strategists. The peasants are their friends, and they find out their enemies' movements, while their own are unknown, and, of course, all this is much in their favour. Whether Cuba would be better governed by the Cubans than by the Spanish is an open question. The fact is, they are both of Spanish descent, and the nature of the climate, combined with the fertility of the island, is not conducive to active living. Their career is summed up in their own favourite expression, 'Hasta mañana.' Everything can wait for 'to-morrow,' while the all-important 'to-day' is spent in consuming endless coffee and cigarettes; and it is difficult to see how this fatal tendency can be eradicated by any turn of events, nor can I see that there is any particular probability of the qualities which go to make up a successful nation becoming developed by republicanism, in the event of Cuba gaining her liberty."

THE WORLD OF SPORT.

FOOTBALL.

What may be called the first spell of the League season is come to its customary close, the first round of the Football Association Cup-ties intervening ere the final burst is entered upon. As a rule, at this date it is fairly easy to forecast the final positions, there or thereabouts; but, in this present remarkable season, it is absolutely impossible to go further than name the three teams likely to finish at the head of each division. As to the order of position, time alone can tell us. Let the reader study the following figures, and he will then realise at a glance the difficulties which have beset the *fin-de-siècle* prophet—

	Played.	Won.	Drawn.	Lost.	Points.	Goals For.	Goals Against.
Aston Villa ...	23	16	3	4	35	58	32
Derby County ...	21	14	3	4	31	57	25
Everton ...	22	13	5	4	31	53	29

These figures show how the three leading First Division clubs stand up to date; but, as a matter of fact, it is by no means impossible for one or two of the thirteen other clubs to draw up and displace one of them. Such a contingency, however, is by no means likely, and I should say, from a careful study of the matches yet to be played, that it is extremely doubtful whether the positions of Aston Villa, Derby County, and Everton, as given above, will undergo any alteration.

It is indeed an astonishing coincidence that a similar state of affairs should exist in the Second Division. Here we have Liverpool (say Aston Villa) showing the way, with the Burton Wanderers (say Everton) and Manchester City (say Derby County) second and third. It will be noticed that, from a relative point of view, Derby County and Manchester are the actual leaders, but all those versed in football matters will agree that it is far better to have the points than to have to get them.

CRICKET.

The Australian team of cricketers to visit England has been published, and I venture to say that nine out of every ten followers of the game in this country have been astonished at the composition of the combination. Names we had confidently looked for are missing, while there are some of the selected whose chances had been held over here in very light esteem. One important fact, which seems to have been generally overlooked, is that the cable mentions only thirteen players. Anyone with experience in such matters knows very well that to take such a small band to another country is simply a gratuitous invitation to disaster. Speaking from memory, I should say that never less than fifteen men have been comprised in a touring-party of cricketers representing another country. I take it that ere very long we shall hear of one or two men being selected to make up the combination.

The honoured thirteen may be split up into two divisions. Of the men who have previously visited England there are but five, namely, the Midget, S. E. Gregory, of New South Wales, H. Trott, H. Graham, and H. Trumble, of Victoria, and the veteran George Giffen, of South Australia. Giffen, of course, was a certainty. It is true he is not so young as he used to be, in a manner of speaking, but he is still entitled to be designated the "Dr. W. G. Grace of Australia." When he came over in 1893 he was probably the most useful man among the Cornstalks, and the majority of us will expect further triumphs from his bat and ball. With Graham we shall all be eager to renew acquaintance. As a batsman, he has a style of his own, a style which is as near perfection as can possibly be got. With a defence almost as safe as Abel's; and an attack approaching in vigour to that of the giant Lyons, Graham is eminently a people's player. The choice of Trumble has evoked much comment, in view of that player's moderate success in this country; but Harry Trott, who will probably captain the team, is as much a certainty as our own Andrew Ernest Stoddart would be in an English team.

The new-comers consist of J. Eady, of Tasmania; T. R. McKibbin, F. A. Iredale, and H. Donnan, of New South Wales; A. Johns and J. Harry, of Victoria; and E. Jones and J. Darling, of South Australia. Of these, Englishmen will be most anxious to see Iredale, the hero of that splendid score of 140 against Mr. Stoddart's eleven. It is a remarkable fact that the first three on the list of batting averages against the English team furnish but one member of the new side, this being Giffen. Young Clement Hill, who came out on top with the remarkable average of 113, we can perhaps understand being left out, because we do not know much about him, and, as a matter of fact, he played in only three matches; but for the omission of A. E. Trott we have yet to find explanation. Trott not alone batted well, but he accomplished some remarkable bowling feats into the bargain. He took only nineteen wickets, but, be it remembered, these were mostly in international matches.

The fresh enthusiasm which is being infused into Notts. County cricket is indeed refreshing. With large promises of support, and a system of fostering home talent, it is to be sincerely trusted that the lace county may now begin to ascend the ladder from the topmost rung of which they have steadily slid down. Colonel W. E. Denison made a few very pertinent remarks at the annual general meeting, chiefly directed against Lancashire League cricket, which, he said, kept young professionals out of first-class and county cricket altogether. It was the opinion of many good sportsmen that League cricket did great harm to the game. Lancashire did not produce cricketers, and so the clubs had to hire them from Notts and from Yorkshire, when they could get them; and so, when a county executive wanted

a player, they found he was engaged in a big League match, where he was wanted to frighten the batsmen on the other side by bowling fast on a bad wicket. A county which had twenty-two cricketers, say, concluded Colonel Denison, and could only employ eleven, could not, as long as County Championships existed, help them being transferred to other counties, but they wanted the transfer to be *bonâ fide*, and they did object to a man playing for one county when he was living in another.

ROWING.

Both University crews have now settled down to steady work, but, of course, until they appear on Metropolitan waters little can be said of their respective merits. It is worth noting that E. R. Balfour has resigned the captaincy of the Dark Blue football fifteen, in order to take his seat (at No. 5) in the boat. It is seldom that a man secures a football and a rowing "blue." The combination is not so common as football and cricket, though, if I remember aright, P. H. Illingworth very narrowly escaped the rare honour.

OLYMPIAN.

RACING NOTES BY CAPTAIN COE.

Ante-post betting is gradually becoming a thing of the past, and no wonder, seeing that latter-day speculators like to get a run for their money. A well-known commission agent told me a day or two back that any owner could in these times back his fancy on the day of the race to win £15,000 or £20,000, provided the commission went through the right channels. It seems that, by the aid of local agents, it is possible to place £100 in each of several large towns in England without the money finding its way back to the ring. I know the astute owner of Tyrant and other good horses used to work the country from Land's End to John o' Groats in this way, and he used to land some huge sums if the horses backed were successful.

As the acceptances for the Spring Handicaps will be published in a day or two, these events can be allowed a rest. I am told that Minstrel Boy was backed for a pile of money on the Continental lists for the Lincoln Handicap, even before the entries were published. The horse certainly put in a fine performance at Gatwick last year. I looked him over after the race, and he seemed to me a perfect racehorse. Some of the sharp division think Black Andrew has an immense chance, and I heard of an individual travelling a hundred miles last week to tell a friend of this, as he would not trust the secret on paper. It must, however, be admitted that Black Andrew has some leeway to make up if he is to beat several of the horses engaged.

There are at the present time nearly a score of horses in training with tubes in their throats, and the operation of tracheotomy does not, apparently, affect their well-being, for such animals as the Continental and Bohemia are often winning races. As this simple operation has proved so efficacious in the case of horses that are roarers, I cannot see what is to prevent its being tried on men suffering from severe asthma. My own impression is that asthmatical subjects would gain great benefits from the tube. Unfortunately, the hole in the horse's throat in which the tube is inserted is always a running sore, but I am told that there would be great danger attending any attempt to remedy this.

It is hoped that, in the near future, we shall see our long-distance races in England better patronised than they are at present. True, a large field turns out each autumn for the Cesarewitch, but quite 50 per cent. of the starters cannot stay the course. The number of five-furlong sprints, encouraged of late years in the interests of gate-money meetings, and indirectly in the interests of the bookmakers, have done a lot of harm to racehorses. There are, I should say, double the number of rogues in training to-day that there were ten years ago; and it is a fact that many of the unreliable horses we have, have run more than the average number of times in five-furlong races. The Straight Miles that were initiated with such a flourish of trumpets are of little use. What we want is more races of a mile and upwards, to be run on round courses.

Owners find the greatest difficulty in naming their two-year-olds, and I think that Messrs. Weatherby ought to always keep in stock, say, a couple of thousand appropriate names ready for use. I also think, to save telegraphic expenses, a single word should be chosen, so far as possible, for a horse's name. Absurd selections, like Tommy up a Pear-tree, cost the newspapers a little fortune for telegraphing, to say nothing of blocking the wires. Fancy having to telegraph five words for one name, five for one winner, and again five for one horse in the betting, besides five words several times over in the description of the race! Owners might assist the Press a good deal by choosing one-word names for their horses.

What is done with all the old members' badges belonging to our racing clubs? I propose that the managers of race-meetings send them for distribution each year to the *Truth* Toy Fund. The brooches worn by the ladies attending the club enclosures at the Metropolitan meetings are very tasty, and, what is more, they are strongly made, and would last for years. The gentlemen's badges, too, could be easily converted into brooches. These would make a very useful addition to the number of toys annually distributed under the patronage of Mr. Labouchere.

OUR LADIES' PAGES.

FASHIONS UP TO DATE.

Duty and inclination for once joined hands and pointed in the same direction, and so, following their guidance, I found myself in due course at 11, Dover Street, prepared to interview the Riviera gowns which had their temporary abiding-place with Kate Reily.

And these latest creations of the famous modiste were most interesting subjects, I can assure you, more especially as they preach the lesson of the new sleeve, with a pleasing moderation which does not shock our delicate susceptibilities, but leads us gently into the straight and narrow path of the latest arm-covering.

Kate Reily has not as yet adopted the absolutely tight sleeve, but the dimensions of the puff are gradually shrinking, and the sword of Damocles is slowly but surely descending upon our devoted heads.

In the meantime, you can endeavour to forget its existence by thinking of a gown of the palest tan-coloured cloth, with a twist of emerald-green satin outlining the waist, and held in here and there with turquoise buckles. The bodice acted as a background for graceful trails of flowers and leaves, embroidered in a paler shade of silk, and opened at the top to admit a little jabot of yellowish lace, which fell from a knotted tie of vivid-green velvet, and was guarded at either side by three turquoise studs. The green velvet appeared again as a collar-band, and the sleeves, of most modest dimensions, were unadorned save at the wrist, where a touch of lace relieved their simplicity.

Then there was a canvas gown, which is destined to adorn Monte Carlo with its bright, beautiful shade of blue, the skirt cut in battlements at the foot to show insertion of cream guipure, through which gleamed a frill of yellow glacé. In the bodice the yellow and blue chord was struck again with excellent effect, the waistband of shot glacé finishing

mastered in London if the Riviera were not, for any reason, accessible. Here the skirt was left severely alone, strong in the consciousness of its perfect cut and general perfection, while the zouave bodice was adorned with many little tabs of thick braid, and opened over a full, soft vest of cream chiffon and lace, which eventually lost itself in a deep waistband of chiné glacé, where subdued tones of purple, blue, green,



and pink contended amicably together for the mastery. Beneath this waist-belt two tiny frills of the chiné silk secured all the advantages of a basque for the wearer's figure, and remained absolutely original in style, and the sleeves were made notable by a series of pipings, which held them in tightly from wrist to elbow.

After this I basely deserted, and went over to the side of the evening-dresses, being lured to envious admiration by an exquisite gown, which was the very apotheosis of simplicity. The original foundation of white satin was veiled by palest pink chiffon, which, in its turn, was covered with delicate pink-spotted muslin, each spot, you must know, having been worked by hand.

The amount of labour involved is, as you can imagine, enormous, and, naturally, has a considerable influence upon the cost; but those who appreciate something entirely unique will consider the new muslin well worth the price, for the slight irregularity of the spots entirely does away with the usual monotony and stiffness of such a design.

But ordinary folks may marvel at the latest Parisian caprice, which devotes such untold labour to a fabric of fairy-like lightness, and one, too, which is necessarily short-lived; but, after all, it is beautiful, and Kate Reily is showing it in such exquisite shades of green, pink, and blue that it would fascinate the most prejudiced utilitarian imaginable.

Meanwhile, the particular gown which occasioned this disquisition is patiently awaiting completion in the shape of a softly ruched skirt border, and a waistband of pink glacé which has imprisoned a cluster of wee pink roses. The baby bodice is softly gathered at the top, and many rows of stitching keep the fulness of the puffed sleeves in bondage till the shoulders have been passed, and then they break out with a foam of white tulle to keep their soft pinkness company. A bunch of pink roses and a bow of glacé ribbon constitute the sole trimming, and here you have in perfection the simplicity which conceals so much art; moreover, so long a bill—a fact, however, which will never be comprehended by the average masculine mind, to which a muslin gown invariably conveys a delightful assurance of the inexpensive tastes so desirable in a wife.

There was another evening-dress, too, of pale forget-me-not blue satin, which attained to an almost fairy-like loveliness by a veiling drapery of white net embroidered with pearls and sequins, which took upon themselves the likeness of the most dainty blossoms and their protecting leaves.

For all such purposes net is infinitely more effective than the misty softness of chiffon, and, as a matter of fact, more durable; and these combined reasons are pushing it into prominence just now.

But, in a dress which was guiltless of embroidery, accordion-pleated chiffon, in a lovely shade of blue, was used for the soft, full bodice, the square *décolletage* gathered into a tiny ruffling sewn with seed-pearls, while the enormously deep waistband was of pale-mauve satin. Either a blue or a mauve satin skirt could be worn at discretion, and,



with a long-ended bow, while there was a vest of pleated yellow satin, and the bodice was slashed open at the sides in order that it might be laced together again with chains of gleaming green, blue, and golden jewels, while the lace insertion over the yellow added to the effect.

And the sleeves were small and plain, and merely finished at the wrist with a little pleating of satin.

Then it seemed to me that there was a valuable lesson to be learnt from a dress of soft, dark-green cloth, and a lesson, moreover, which might be

though the combination of colour, unrelieved as it was, was somewhat startling, it was also very effective.

In these skirts, as in all the others which Kate displayed to my admiring view, I noticed a subtle difference in the hang of the folds, which prepared me for the statement that they were absolutely innocent of any stiff interlining; so horsehair and the like are apparently destined to accompany the Great Sleeve into exile, and foulards and silk



crapes seem destined to be chief among the chosen fabrics which are to give us the gracefully draped folds to which we have so long been strangers.

And, of course, Kate Reily had many and beautiful Louis coat-bodices, each one of which cried out with such persuasive voice to be taken to the Riviera that I fled before their charms, only to fall into the clutches of a young and enthusiastic acquaintance—jealousy forbids me to call her friend—who was about to forsake London for Monte Carlo, and who insisted on carrying me off bodily to inspect her gowns. I was a disappointing acquisition, however, for Kate Reily had captured all my available enthusiasm; but I must admit that I was eventually roused to interest by a brown canvas dress, which had its two front skirt-seams covered by a stitched strap, from beneath which, just at the foot, peeped out two bow-ends of black satin ribbon. The front of the bodice was of grass-green silk, embroidered in many-coloured silks, and adorned with lace appliqué, which glittered with gold sequins; but it was the back which arrested my attention.

It was cut all in one, the slight fulness held in just above the waist by two loops of the ribbon, while the waistband headed a short, full basque, which came to an end at the sides. Coarse-meshed black net and loops of ribbon arranged at the shoulders disguised the comparative skimpiness of the sleeves, and this novel trimming was introduced again in the front, where it formed a slight pouch. Altogether, as an indication of the new styles, the dress was notable, hence the appearance of its portrait in these pages. And then temptation, before which I succumbed, came again, in the shape of an entirely desirable coat, fashioned of emerald-green velvet, cut short to the waist in front, but, at the back, boasting of tiny basques. It was rendered still more fascinating by broad, rounded revers of black satin, ablaze with an elaborate embroidery of emeralds and sapphires, while the collar was held together in front by a little chain of turquoises. The hat destined to crown this charming union of green and blue was diminutive in shape, and fashioned of emerald-green straw, the trimming being entirely concentrated on the left side, where an emerald buckle held in place a great flat rosette of black velvet, from which rose two high ostrich-tips, one black and one green.

And then there was a second hat, also of green straw, but, in this case, flat as to the brim, which was veiled with cloudy folds of white and of green tulle, with waxen-white gardenias and their glossy leaves peeping out at the right side, while another cluster of the same lovely flowers nestled against the hair under the brim at the left side; and high above all rose two white ospreys, arranged in quill-fashion, and decorated with a tiny bit of black velvet, hand-painted so cleverly that, for a moment, I imagined that superstition had been defied and the peacock's plumage tampered with. The whole effect was so charming that it inspired me with the powers of divination, and I proclaimed this hat aloud as the creation of Kate Reily, a statement which I found to be perfectly correct; and so, by a devious way, I finished where I began, or would have done but that I want to add a postscript devoted to the chronicling of the three gowns which Miss Gertrude Kingston is wearing at the Duke of York's.

I always take an interest in this fascinating actress's garments, and I have considered myself, and the public generally, aggrieved lately by reason of the fact that the exigencies of the last two pieces in which she

has appeared have condemned her to the garb of a nurse, and the bedraggled and shabby garments of the conventionally ill-used heroine.

Now, however, we have her in a skirt of pale-yellow corded silk, and a bodice of satin to match, sprigged with a tiny leaf-pattern, and opening over a vest of pale-blue satin, which in its turn gives place to a soft, full front of lawn and lace, held in at the waist by four bands of narrow brown satin ribbon, each finished with a smart little bow. She wears, too, a particularly *chic* hat of pale-tan coloured straw, bordered with black velvet, and trimmed with bows of satin ribbon in two shades of brown, and clusters of forget-me-nots and tender-green and pink roses.

Picturesque simplicity is represented by a white bengaline gown, with a Tudor cape and collar of coffee-coloured point-lace, finished with long ends, which are caught in at the waist by two diamond buttons; while, for startling effect, you could hardly improve upon Miss Kingston's evening-gown of white silk, with broad stripes of black satin, which are arranged with consummate art. A huge bow of brilliant rose-pink velvet finishes the corsage in front, while at the back it is crossed by braces of rose-petals, the shoulders being outlined by jet-spangled net, which gives place in due course to sleeves formed of two flounces of net, bordered with narrow satin ribbon.

Those rose-petal braces are altogether charming, and we should accord a vote of thanks to Miss Kingston for introducing them to us.

FLORENCE.

RUSTIC ADORNMENT.

The reissue of the late Shirley Hibberd's "Rustic Adornments for Homes of Taste" (Collingridge) has been revised by Mr. T. W. Sanders, F.R.H.S., editor of *Amateur Gardening*. The book contains a consider-



THE HOME OF TASTE.

able amount of botanical information, but even this, and frequent quotations from Virgil, Horace, Keats, and (save the mark!) Tupper, scarcely seem to justify the truly hideous border in gold and green with which the publisher has seen fit to adorn every page. The illustrations in black and white are certainly better than the coloured frontispiece; but, then, that is not hard to beat, for how anything so *outré* both in colour and in painting could have got into an otherwise respectable work is difficult



AN AMATEUR'S SUMMER-HOUSE.

to imagine. It even shames the border. The text, while preserving "as much as possible the late Mr. Hibberd's charming style," has been brought up to date, and may prove of assistance to those who would adorn both house and grounds. The purpose of the book is laudable, the matter often good, and it is a pity that the get-up of a book making for refinement should savour so little of that virtue.

SOCIETY ON CYCLES.

If not so widely known as some other machines, the "Elswick" cycles have few equals, and probably no superior, for beauty and stability. The company, which was formed within the last decade, determined to manufacture nothing but the best, and no better tribute is necessary than the fact that they have carried off three Championships of England and four of Scotland, besides numerous Continental events. That the brilliance of finish and *recherché* appearance are not the sole virtues of the Elswick cycles is further exemplified in the award of the Diplôme d'Honneur at the Paris Exhibition.

The first of the Elswick innovations was a new system of bearings, the surface of which was continually in a bath of oil. When under great strain, friction is considerably reduced. Then followed the famous truss tubes, while various other improvements too numerous to mention have also been introduced, as to which I will revert at a future date. Notwithstanding the high price which is necessary for so elegant a machine, the Elswicks are continually in great request. It may be remembered that in 1893 a disastrous fire completely wrecked the buildings of the headquarters at Newcastle-on-Tyne; but the new works, covering a space of twenty-five thousand feet, and at which some seven hundred skilled mechanics are employed, enable the full output to reach about ten thousand per annum. I may add that the London agents for the Elswick cycles are the Stereoscopic Company, who keep a large stock at their Regent Street house, and, unlike many cycle manufacturers, are in a position to deliver immediately from stock any cycle listed. To riders who, naturally, like to inspect the identical mount that they are going to have, this is a distinct advantage.

The Highways Committee of St. Helens have evidently yet something to learn in regard to the bicycle. They recently agreed that a machine would assist the surveyor in performing his labours. A gentleman who, doubtless, wished to expose his technical knowledge, suggested that two or three pounds would buy a good, strong bicycle; but the "amendment" from an alderman that, if they paid a poor price, they would certainly receive only a light racing-machine that would not stand the roads, fairly brought the curtain down! Let me assure the Highways Committee at St. Helens that machines are not bought by weight.

I understand that the Dover Board of Guardians have decided not to impose a cycle tax. The administrative authorities of Bath and Keynsham have likewise refused to support petitions in favour of the tax. Even the Hexham District Council—representing, as it does, the agriculturists—have determined not to support the proposed memorial to the Chancellor of the Exchequer advocating the tax.

I hear that there will presently be a conference between the Irish Cycling Association and its branches, in order to arrive at some harmonious understanding.

The Marquis of Londonderry has just agreed to grant a plot of ground to the Silksworth Colliery Club, on which to lay both cycle and running tracks. The enclosure is intended for amateur riders only.

I understand that Sir Francis Jeune has just become a patron of the Polytechnic Club.

It is pleasant to see the tails of the genus reckless rider salted. At Ayr the other day, one of the "scorching" brigade had his ardour somewhat damped by a fine of three pounds, with the alternative of twenty-one days' imprisonment, for reckless riding between Maybole and Ayr, thereby knocking down and severely injuring a young woman. I understand that in the Blackburn streets cyclists have been restricted to eight miles an hour.

I see that the Mayor of Newcastle-on-Tyne, at a recent dinner, warned cyclists to be wary, should a tax be put upon them, to see that the amount went towards the improvement of the roads.

From a private letter to the Raleigh Cycle Company from Teheran, Persia, under date Dec. 16, the following remarks are likely to prove interesting—

A few days ago, a German cyclist, a Mr. Knoll, of Munich, arrived here en route round the world. He wishes to traverse Afghanistan, but I doubt whether he will be allowed to do so; and if he attempts it without permission, it is questionable whether he can get through. On leaving Munich, he travelled *via* Austria and Bulgaria to Constantinople, but, not being allowed to cross Turkey in Asia, had to take steamer to Trebizond, which he reached at the time of the Armenian Massacre. He remained on board ship, but went ashore afterwards, when he was not allowed to proceed. His shoes were stained with mud and blood in going through the streets in which the butchery had occurred to get to the Consulate and the telegraph-office, where his message was refused. In consequence of this prohibition, Mr. Knoll continued his voyage on the steamer to Batoum, where he landed, pursuing his journey thence *via* Tiflis, Erivan, Djoulfa, Tauris, and Caswin, to Teheran. He is staying here for a month or so, and will probably have to continue his ride through Ispahan, Shiraz, Bunderabbas, and Jask, to Kurrachee, and on. He says the Bulgarian roads are the worst he has ever travelled over, rivalled in badness only by the native Persians—the worst people he has ever met.

I understand that Major-General Lord Methuen, commanding the Home District, has just appointed Major F. Lloyd, of the Grenadier Guards, district cycling officer.

They have an appreciation of humour in Niagara City which is distinctly refreshing. It has been proposed in that up-to-date spot to levy a tax on cycle-tracks constructed, which will be expended on side-paths for public roads. To make cyclists pay for the comfort of

pedestrians reminds us of the learned Far West judge, who observed, "Prisoner at the Bar, you have been found Not Guilty; but you will have to pay the costs of the prosecution, which will go towards the fund being raised for the Society of Aged Policemen."

Albert Chevalier is said to be engaged on the manufacture of a coster cycling-song. We did not know that costers rode bicycles, but we are willing to believe, so long as the song is funny.

POSTAGE STAMPS OF BRITISH EAST AFRICA.

A brief account of the postage stamps of the British East Africa Company recently appeared in these pages. Some notice of the history of these stamps since the territory of the Company has been taken over by the Government, and become a British Protectorate, will doubtless prove of interest. When the Company's rule terminated, it was found that a considerable quantity of the stamps manufactured by Messrs. Bradbury, Wilkinson, and Co. remained on hand, and fears were at first entertained that these would be put into "remainder," and sold for what they would fetch, their monetary value being thus completely destroyed, and the labels themselves falling into the same category of non-collectable rubbish as the numberless issues of the "Seebeckised" States of South and Central America, and the mass of postal stationery "made for collectors," which it is the object of the Society for the Suppression of Speculative Stamps to oppose and put an end to by rendering all future output unremunerative to its producers. Happily this was not done, and the authorities at Mombasa decided on the far more reasonable plan of adopting the stock of stamps remaining in hand, and employing them for legitimate postal use. They were accordingly surcharged "British East Africa," and all were disposed of in the ordinary course of business. This surcharge (which is in three lines, in black) was applied by a hand-stamp upon each label separately, and is exceedingly rough and uneven in execution.

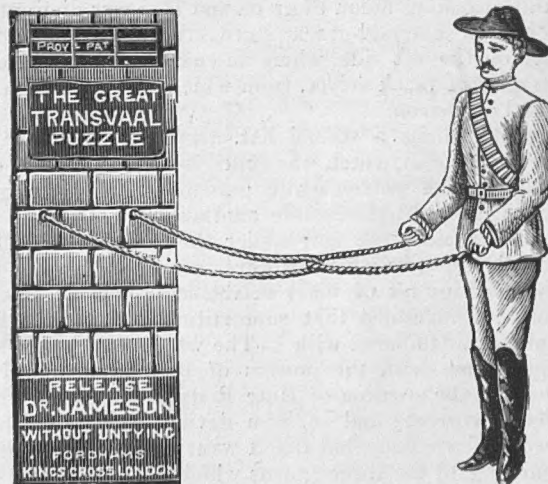
While the stock of the old Company's stamps was thus in course of dispersal, a second provisional issue was prepared in London. This was a series of the lower values of the stamps of British India, surcharged by Messrs. De La Rue and Co. with the same over-print. These are now being employed in the Protectorate, and will continue in circulation there until the permanent set, which Messrs De La Rue and Co. are now preparing, is ready for use.

Hitherto, the fecundity of Western Australia in the matter of provisionals has not been great, and this colony has consequently enjoyed an amount of respect and attention from serious philatelists which has been denied to so many others—among which British Honduras, Ceylon, Oil Rivers Protectorate, and the Straits Settlements are most prominent—at one time high in favour, but who have now fallen into comparative neglect by reason of their eagerness to produce temporary issues with startling rapidity. But on Nov. 1, 1895, the supply of halfpenny stamps in Perth gave out, and the current threepenny was over-printed in order to meet the demand for labels of the lower value. This surcharge was at first applied in *red*; but when only ninety copies had been worked off, it was discovered that the over-print was not sufficiently perceptible, and the colour was changed to *green*, twelve thousand in all being ultimately struck off. Examples of the earlier ninety, with the surcharge in red, have already been sold for two or three guineas each, and, as the reason for the change of colour was a justifiable one, the stamp forms an honest and reputable variety, and will in time, no doubt, take high rank in the list of philatelic rarities.



"DR. JIM."

Here is the latest thing in puzzles. It consists of two pieces of white iron, one representing a wall and the other "Dr. Jim." They are tied



up together, and the problem is to release them without untying the knots. The puzzle is made by Messrs. W. B. Fordham and Sons, Limited, York Road, King's Cross, N.

CITY NOTES.

The Next Settlement begins on Feb. 10.

SPECULATION AND AGITATION.

This business about the Uitlanders in the Transvaal has come down to a very sordid level now, for there is no longer any room for doubt that the present stage of the agitation is being carried on as a commercial venture by certain people who ought to know better. Indeed, it is roundly asserted by not a few people that the whole "revolution" was a

"put-up job" to put money into the pockets of certain large financial houses, whose names are freely bandied about; but be this as it may, it is at least pretty self-evident that all genuine excitement on the Rand has now completely cooled down, and the better class out there realise that they have been playing a foolish game and have been completely beaten.

All they want now is to resume work and the old order of things, leaving the desirable reforms in the law of the country to be obtained by methods more constitutional than rifles and Maxim guns. But among the mass of Uitlanders there are many spirits of the baser sort,

who are determined to keep the anxiety up if possible, in order that they may make money as "bears," and these men have been despatching to this country all sorts of alarming rumours and despairing appeals.

A more discreditable exhibition of how trouble may be fomented in order to help money-making we have never seen; but we are glad to observe that the South African Market has not lost its head, and is gradually learning to appraise these anonymous panic-mongers at their true worth. It is very satisfactory also to find Mr. Chamberlain coming forward to check-mate these underhand tactics; and he certainly does not mince matters. "These telegrams," he says, "are nearly all anonymous, and, although differently worded, contain some internal evidence that they emanate from one small group of persons"; and it may be safely assumed that his despatch of Sir Jacobus de Wet from Pretoria to Johannesburg, to investigate, will put a stop to these misleading messages. The Uitlanders have not exhibited themselves in a good light throughout the whole affair, and have done an infinite amount of harm to their own cause, which was just in itself; but this last performance of all, the sending of bogus tales of the Boers assaulting women and children, and threatening massacre, is simply deplorable.

Another bogey that has been raised is the idea that the Rand mining industry is to be stopped "because of the scarcity of labour," which is simply a round-about way of saying that the mine-owners, having been beaten by the Boers, "won't play" any longer, like spoiled little boys. The notion is simply absurd that an industry like Rand mining, which results in an output of about two and a-half million ounces of gold per annum, will come to a standstill simply because the 20,000 Uitlanders pretended that they wanted to fight, and a few thousands of Boers persuaded them that they didn't.

The talk of shutting down the mines is merely another of the dodges to depress the Kaffir Market, and President Krüger was quite right in roundly describing the labour difficulty as simply a subterfuge. His outspoken declaration that he had detected the trick, would protect the mines, assist in the obtaining of labour, and smartly punish any attempt to create more trouble, cannot fail to do good; and Mr. Chamberlain is hardly less emphatic—

Mr. Chamberlain believes that the vast majority of persons in this country who are financially interested in the Rand are entirely opposed to any efforts to revive gratuitously the troubles at Johannesburg for political purposes, and that the majority of those on the spot who control the working of mines have no intention of stopping work in order to bring about a crisis; but there may be others among them who are of a different way of thinking, and this is an aspect of the matter which he recommends for the consideration of shareholders, directors, and all others whom it may concern.

In view of all this, these mercenary mischief-makers must surely see that their game is up, and that the time has come to cease their pestilent efforts to cause another break in the Mining Market. In their elaborately organised plot they have already succeeded far too well, and it is high time that they should be made to smart by being caught as "bears" in a strongly advancing market.

The carry-over has afforded ample evidence that there is still a heavy short-interest in the market. It is certainly not the public that is a "bear," but those market-manipulators of whom we speak. They are making every effort to buy back quietly; but the amount of floating stock is so small that they are unable to get many shares without causing the price to rise against them. Accordingly, their game is to keep the market stagnant and heavy, in the hope of wearing-out the patience of holders and bringing out the real stock they are so anxious to obtain. They have made vigorous efforts to bring about a smash, which would, of course, be better still, from their point of view; but they have ignominiously failed. The public has refused to stampede any more, and the attempt to "bang" prices now in the Kaffir Market is like trying to knock down a stone wall with one's head. The result is simply to commit them deeper on the "bear" side; while what they really want is to reduce their short commitment.

The longer the Rand can be kept in a condition of disorganisation, so much the better for those who are pulling the strings; but we are very strongly of opinion that it will be found impossible to prevent the continuance of work on pretty much the old scale. The preliminary inquiry with regard to the prisoners is to take place next week, and, meanwhile, all but five or six of the most important are on bail. Last week we explained what we expected would happen to the ringleaders, of two of whom we give illustrations. When the trials are over, matters will settle down, and even the panic-mongers will have no excuse to keep the injurious agitation alive.

We still think, therefore, that the present is a most tempting opportunity for locking-up the better class of shares; and whatever is bought ought to be paid for and taken off the market, for every share so withdrawn increases the difficulty of the "bears" in getting back what they have oversold.

HOME RAILS.

Almost the only disappointing dividend so far declared is the Great Northern, and yet, when we come to look into the figures, we find that out of a gross increase of £121,000 the net gain has been £70,000, so that, after all, there is not so much to complain of.

Of late there has been quite a little "boom" in this class of security, and every day investment orders keep pouring in. We confess that, on merits, we can see no justification for very much higher prices; but yet, with cheap money, the final settlement of the ship-building dispute, the disturbed state of foreign politics, and improving trade, we fully expect belated investors will continue to purchase at almost any price that the jobbers care to mark the stocks up to. For our own money we see many equally attractive and far more remunerative investments; but to say so is like "the voice of one crying in the wilderness," and if the Heavy dividends are up to expectations, we fully expect that even the present inflated state of prices will show considerable improvement within the next few weeks. There is a renewal of the agitation to get rid of Mr. Forbes from the Hull and Barnsley Board. We wish it all success, but fear that shareholders are too much like sheep to overthrow the shepherd.

THE YANKEE MARKET.

Confidence seems to be reviving in this once the most active section of the stock markets, and not only is there more business, but a considerable step forward has been made by the agreement arrived at during the week between the great coal lines. We expect that the arrangement of this long-standing difficulty will have a beneficial effect on the whole American Market, but it may be prudent to await the result of the bond issue before making sure that we have seen an end of the stagnation which has continued for so long.

SANTA FÉ AND RECONQUISTA RAILWAY BONDS.

Last week, in answer to a correspondent, we advised the purchase of these bonds, which have, since the answer was written, risen smartly from 24 to about 30. We knew confidentially that a very favourable arrangement had been arrived at, but the terms upon which the news was communicated to us prevented any public announcement of what was about to happen. As the matter is now pretty well public property, we break no confidence in saying that the whole eight hundred miles of railway will be vested in a new company, and that the old Reconquista bond-holders will get about 110 per cent. in the securities of the new concern, of which a sufficient portion will be in well-secured 4 per cent. debentures to make the present bonds worth about 40, irrespective of the shares, which may become valuable in the course of time. The bonds are, therefore, still worth buying by people who are willing to risk a trifle with something more than a chance of making a fair "haul." Things all round in Argentina are steadily looking up, and most of the railway debentures and income bonds, the purchase of which we have preached for months, show good rises. For people wanting a fairly safe security of a progressive nature, Cordoba Central Northern Section 4 per cent. first debentures are an excellent purchase.

THE NITRATE OUTLOOK.

Holders of shares in nitrate-producing companies will, no doubt, be gratified by the considerable advance which has of late taken place in



MR. LIONEL PHILLIPS,
PRESIDENT OF THE CHAMBER OF MINES.
Photo by Goch, Johannesburg.



MR. CHARLES LEONARD,
PRESIDENT OF THE UITLANDERS' NATIONAL UNION.

the value of their securities. In the official "Making-Up List" of last week we find the following rises recorded, the greater part of which occurred during the last few days of the Account: Julia Taltal $\frac{1}{16}$, Lagunas Nitrate 1, Lagunas Syndicate $\frac{1}{8}$, Lautaro $1\frac{1}{8}$, London Nitrate Preferred 1, New Tamarugal $\frac{1}{16}$, ditto Debentures 5, Paccha $\frac{3}{4}$, Rosario $\frac{1}{8}$, San Donato $\frac{1}{4}$, San Jorge $\frac{1}{8}$, San Pablo $\frac{5}{8}$, San Sebastian $\frac{1}{8}$, Santa Rita 1. Since the list was published, further advances have taken place, and the collective appreciation represents a very large amount of money.

Of course, the reason for this sudden spurt in the quotations of securities which have so long been depressed, is the reported formation of a combination to restrict output, which we have every reason to believe is well founded. The recent history of this important industry is a curious one, and well illustrates the vicissitudes to which it is liable. Only a short time ago—that is to say, during the second half of 1894—the Nitrate Companies were getting the best prices for their product that had ever been known; their shares mounted to a high figure, and everything for the time being was *couleur de rose*. But that bane of the business, over-production, was scotched, and not killed, and very soon began to revive again.

The reasons are not far to seek. The sales of the Government nitrate grounds caused more native producers to enter the field, while, among the English companies, the Lagunas, a new and big concern, working rich ground and with immense command of capital and machinery, became an important factor in production. Other companies, stimulated by the high figures obtainable for the fertiliser, and also by the fact that several of them had purchased fresh grounds from the Chilean Government, began also to increase their output, so that, from the early part of last year, prices began to droop again, until, at the beginning of the autumn, they had reached a level as low as it had previously been high a year before. The full effect of this fall in prices was not shown by those companies which closed their year at the end of June last, for they had enjoyed the benefit of high prices during the first half of the period.

Nevertheless, several of them did very badly, notably the Primitiva, while one or two were compelled to shut down their *oficinas*. This course was, no doubt, a wise one, for the smaller and poorer companies could only compete in the race at a loss to themselves—a loss doubly onerous, because they were at the same time exhausting their grounds. But this mad competition was telling also upon the best-equipped and most fortunately situated companies, and before long it became evident that the only remedy lay in forming a combination in order to bring about a more healthy relation between supply and demand.

For several months negotiations were carried on to that end. The native Chilean producers, or "coasters," as they are called, were induced, after some trouble, to agree to the arrangement, and nearly all the English companies acceded to it. The Lautaro, however, which had made an advantageous forward contract for the sale of its output, refused to come in, and this was the chief reason of the delay which has already caused serious loss to many companies. Within the last few days, however, the opposition of the Lautaro is reported to have been overcome, and the combination may now be regarded as formed.

The exact terms are not known, but, unless our information is at fault, it is probable that the arrangement will take effect from March next, and will last for at least a year. The basis is likely to be that of a seven months' output for the year; that is to say, a reduction in the annual production of five-twelfths. Considering the large stocks of nitrate in hand, this reduction is not calculated to raise prices to such an extent as to check the demand; yet, at the same time, it would give to the producing companies a very fair margin of profit, and, while prolonging the life of the grounds, enable them to make a decent return to the shareholders. Nor is it probable that fresh capital will be poured into the field just at present, so that, on the whole, the outlook for the existing companies is distinctly better than it has been for some time past.

A NEW ISSUE.

Some months ago, we were able to say that the Colonial Finance Corporation and the West Australian Pioneers were in negotiation for a large tract of mining-land about five miles south-east of the Great Boulder, and, since then, 504 acres, in twenty-one leases, have been secured. Under the name of the "Corsair Consolidated Gold-Mines, Limited," a company to work the property has been formed, with a capital of £250,000, of which the subscribers to the Memorandum of Association have taken £100,000; and £75,000, in a like number of shares, will be offered during the coming week to the shareholders of the parent companies. The Marquis of Tweeddale is to be chairman, and the company should prove as big a success as Hannan's Proprietary. A substantial premium is already, we understand, freely offered for allotments which have not yet been made. If any of our readers are able to secure shares, they will do well to lock them up. There is, as far as we know, to be no public issue; but, at a reasonably small premium, not over ten shillings a share, we feel confident a purchase in the market would turn out a good speculation.

Saturday, Feb. 1, 1896.

COMPANY AND OTHER ISSUES OF THE WEEK.

The following prospectuses have reached us—

THE BAMBOO QUEEN AND REWARD MINES, LIMITED, is, through the medium of the Pilbarra Goldfields, offering 80,000 shares of £1 each for subscription. The property consists of forty-one acres at Bamboo Creek, on the Pilbarra Goldfield, and a good feature of the prospectus is that the nature of the ore is proved by milling returns, not, as so often happens, merely by assays. In most parts of Western Australia there is

a water difficulty to be faced; but at Bamboo Creek there is abundance of this very necessary fluid, which, we understand, can be obtained in sufficient quantities for all crushing purposes at a very shallow depth, and not charged with mineral deposit. Mining carried on upon the borders of civilisation must for a time be troublesome and expensive; but the directors are men of experience, the surroundings are respectable, a sufficient working capital is guaranteed, and the enterprise promises well.

THE VACUUM FOOD-PRESERVING APPLIANCES, LIMITED, with a capital of £60,000, is formed to purchase and work certain patents for preserving for an indefinite time meats, fish, drugs, either in jars or bottles, or by means of an exhaust-chamber. It is claimed for the company's system that it is simple, clean, avoids the use of solder, and all the trouble and inconvenience of opening tins, jars, and the other forms of packets in which food is preserved. How many of us have struggled with a preserved-tongue or sardine tin at a picnic, and in the end given it up! If the company does what is claimed, and gives us a jar or tin which can be opened by simply piercing the cover, there should be an enormous demand for its goods. The names of several well-known firms are given as using the company's packages, and testimonials are published from the Bovril Company, the Aylesbury Dairy Company, and others, while Mr. Fletcher Moulton, Q.C., is of opinion that the patents are perfectly valid. Upon the whole, the concern appears to be able to supply a very real want, and should do well.

FINANCIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

Correspondents must observe the following rules—

(1) All letters must be addressed to the City Editor, The Sketch Office, 198, Strand, and must reach the Office not later than Friday in each week for answer in the following issue.

(2) Correspondents must send their name and address as a guarantee of good faith, and adopt a nom-de-guerre under which the desired answer may be published. Should no nom-de-guerre be used, the answer will appear under the initials of the inquirer.

(3) Every effort will be made to obtain the information necessary to answer the various questions; but the proprietors of this paper will not be responsible for the accuracy or correctness of the reply, or for the financial result to correspondents who act upon any answer which may be given to their inquiries.

(4) Every effort will be made to reply to correspondence in the issue of the paper following its receipt, but in cases where inquiries have to be made the answer will appear as soon as the necessary information is obtained.

(5) All correspondents must understand that if gratuitous answers and advice are desired the replies can only be given through our columns. If an answer by medium of a private letter is asked for, a postal order for five shillings must be enclosed, together with a stamped and directed envelope to carry the reply.

(6) Letters involving matters of law, such as shareholders' rights, or the possibility of recovering money invested in fraudulent or dishonest companies, should be accompanied by the fullest statement of the facts and copies of the documents necessary for forming an accurate opinion, and must contain a postal order for five shillings, to cover the charge for legal assistance in framing the answer.

(7) No anonymous letters will receive attention, and we cannot allow the "Answers to Correspondents" to be made use of as an advertising medium. Questions involving elaborate investigations, disputed valuations, or intricate matters of account cannot be considered.

Unless correspondents observe these rules, their letters will receive no attention.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J. N.—We have made inquiries since writing to you, and find the brokers bear a good repute on the Stock Exchange. We think you may rely on them doing their best for you.

NIL CONSCIRE SIBI.—No jobber in the House has ever heard of dealings in the Syndicate shares, but Forbes was one of the pioneers, and we think well of the concern. The secretary says the Syndicate is interested in 2000 claims, and that it is about to issue a subsidiary company. It is probable that a circular will be issued to the shareholders before the 21st of this month. We hear that a firm of brokers, Messrs. Virtue and Lubbock, of 4, Adam Court, have dealt in the shares, and you might write to them and ask the price. On the information at our disposal we should exercise the option.

A. H. R.—We sent you the name of the solicitor you require on Jan. 29. You ought to get interest, but the amount is too small to fight over if you get the other money.

COIN.—We should hold all the shares mentioned in your letter, and sell one-half at a profit of £1 in each case. Every one of the companies is a sound concern.

S. H. L.—We answered your letter very fully on Jan. 29.

COUNTRY.—From inquiries, we learn that the increase in the takings of the Automatic Sweetmeat Company during the last seventeen weeks amounts to nearly £4000.

SHARE.—Yes, we think a good selection of West Australian mines bought now will give a good profit. The South African Market is halting between two opinions, and much depends on the course of politics in the Transvaal. We prefer of your list Nos. 2 and 3, but Burbanks and Hannan's Proprietary are better than either. St. Augustine shares are in favour at the moment, and if you bought as a gamble you might do well, especially if you were content with a five-shilling profit. Jobbers talk about their going to par.

P. M.—We wrote to you very fully and hope you have got our letter.

W. G. W.—We should not sell Great Easterns if they were our own. The traffics are first-rate, and we think there is far more chance of their going to 100 than to 80. Of course, we only give an opinion for what it may be worth.

N. B.—Crown Reefs are very good. Of course, when we recommended them, we did not anticipate the Jameson Raid. If the shares were our own, we should not feel the least uneasiness about them. We think the dividends are paid quarterly. Of course, you are entitled to the one just declared. If you can muster the money, buy Burbanks, Hannan's Oroya, or Proprietary, and see our "Notes" about Corsair Consolidated, coming out in a few days.

INDUSTRIAL.—(1) Your list is a very good one, and, in the present position of good investments, we hardly know what to advise; but you might take your profit on half your Aërated Bread and Gordon Hotel shares and reinvest the proceeds in Linotype, Assam Trading pref., or Pullman pref. (2) Write it off as a bad debt. (3) Imperial Continental Gas or City of Wellington Waterworks bonds.

O. V. D.—We see no unreasonable risk in your Uruguay $\frac{3}{4}$ stock. If it were our own money, we should not sell. See what we say about Reconquista Railway bonds.

MONTROSE.—You have been a victim of a swindle. Go to law, by all means; but, although you will get a judgment, we do not expect you will ever recover your money. You should deal through brokers who are members of the Stock Exchange. If you wish, we will send you the name of a respectable firm by private letter, in accordance with Rule 5.

CHILD.—(1) A most dangerous gang. Have nothing to do with them or their companies. (2) Australian Mortgage Land and Finance shares are the very thing for you; they will pay very good interest, and the nominal liability is never likely to be called up. (3) Hannan's Proprietary below 1 premium are a good buy.